

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIII, Issue No. 317

THURSDAY MARCH 11, 2004

www.saipantribune.com 50¢

I N S I D E

2003 Look Back

THE SENATE DEBACLE

The soap opera up on Capitol Hill

By JAYVEE VALLEJERA
ASSISTANT EDITOR



This was the year when Mr. Nice Guy took a backseat at the Senate. Civility, manners, and exemplary deportment went flying out the window, as senators went at each other with unsheathed claws, the simmering mélange of uneasy alliances, unmet expectations, and distrust among its members needing just a single spark to ignite the conflagration.

That single spark was provided middle of this year by the stunning convictions of two veteran lawmakers—majority bloc senators Jose Dela Cruz and Ricardo S. Atalig—on charges of defrauding the CNMI government by providing fictitious jobs to their relatives. The untimely departure of the two senators created a critical vacuum in the five-member leadership bloc and placed the four-member minority in the ascendancy, setting the stage for one of the most bizarre incidents in the history of the Commonwealth’s Legislature and nearly paralyzing the legislative process for several critical measures. But that’s getting ahead of the story.

Much like any other crisis, what happened at the Senate this year was no overnight development. It was merely the product of two years of unreconciled differences and spats between the majority and the minority bloc, all building up to its inexorable climax. Smarting from what it perceived as deliberate acts by the majority to exclude the minority bloc from the Senate loop, members of the minority—Sens. Reyes, David M. Cing, and Ramon S. Guerrero—time and

again complained that they are being intentionally kept in the dark by the majority over proposed measures or actions and that they are always being passed over during leadership meetings. Manglona and his group—Sens. Joaquin G. Adriano, Diego M. Songao, Thomas P. Villagomez, Atalig, and Dela Cruz—all denied this, saying the door is always open for the minority to come in and participate in leadership meetings. That never happened.

Then there was their sharp differences in the interpretation of the suspensions of Atalig and Dela Cruz. At that time, the two have not been convicted yet but the minority was insisting that the two should already be suspended and have, in fact, already been suspended with the adoption of appropriate resolutions. The majority differed, saying the two could only be suspended once the court finds them guilty. Before they could resolve the matter, the court found the two senators guilty.

Despite this, Atalig still insisted—with the tacit agreement of the Senate majority—that he is still a member of the upper chamber, to which the minority vociferously objected. By this time, although still officially part of the leadership, Villagomez had effectively transferred his loyalties to the minority, prompting the bloc to argue that four trumps the three remaining members of the majority. Whiffs of a power struggle and a possible leadership coup started circulating within the narrow halls of the Legislature.

Everything came to a head on Aug 27, 2003, during a regular session by the chamber. That fateful day started ominously enough, when Cing stood up to castigate the leadership and accuse it of lying when it claimed that it never received the papers of Commonwealth Utilities



Manglona Reyes

Corp. board member nominee Rufina Miles. As it later turned out, Miles was confirmed to the board. Manglona then called for a short recess and left the building, together with Songao and Adriano.

When the three failed to show up 30 minutes later, the three-member minority, together with Villagomez, reconvened the session and effectively shanghaied the leadership, claiming that, with their superior number, they are now THE majority bloc in the Senate. To seal their hold on the leadership, the four chose Reyes to be the new Senate president and met in several sessions during which they passed several critical measures, including the proposed \$213-million Fiscal Year 2004 spending plan. All this time, Manglona was angrily pointing out in the media that what the four were doing was illegal and contrary to the legal interpretation of what a majority consists of.

With the new majority ignoring him, Manglona was forced to bring the matter to court, asking the CNMI Superior Court to declare the Aug. 27 session and subsequent sessions illegal. He also asked Gov. Juan N. Babauta to freeze all Senate committee accounts, to which the governor acceded, although he said he is not doing this at the behest of Manglona.

On Nov. 18, Judge Kenneth Govendo threw out Manglona’s suit on the ground of judicial abstention, upholding the constitutional doctrine on the separation of the three branches of government. He also urged the two Senate factions to work out among themselves solutions to the issues raised before the court. Fat chance of that happening.

The decision left opposing factions with conflicting interpretations on the legal implications of judicial abstention, with the new majority claiming that the decision means their Aug. 27 actions were valid. Manglona’s camp had a different interpretation, saying the court effectively left the issues for the Senate to resolve.

Seeing that matters could not be resolved with finality unless he has the numbers to back him up, Manglona waited until the holding of the special elections on Tinian and Rota in Oct. and Nov. to find the replacements for Atalig and Dela Cruz. Once the results were in, Manglona aggressively wooed the support of the two new senators—Paterno Hocog of Rota and Joseph Mendiola of Tinian—and got them, enabling him to regain his presidency.

As part of his first official action as the resurgent Senate leader, Manglona suspended all four members of the minority during a session on Rota last Nov. 17 due to the four senators’ alleged violations of CNMI Constitution and the Official Rules of the Senate. Cing, Reyes, and Guerrero were suspended effective for one month, while Villagomez was imposed another separate suspension for 45 days for his alleged involvement in a scheme to defraud the CNMI government—the same case that jailed Atalig and Dela Cruz.

The four threatened to go to court but cooler heads, including that of Babauta, managed to prevail over Manglona, who later decided to shorten the suspensions to just 15 days.

With Manglona’s hold on the Senate leadership now firmly back in place, everything has gone back to normal at the upper chamber, which means back to the usual bickering and political maneuvering. With a lame duck Senate in place, the public cannot expect much in way of new legislation making it before January’s inauguration. So just sit back and relax and wait for the new 14th Senate, which promises to be as entertaining as this year’s batch.

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Senate confirms San Nicolas, Manglona

By MARIAN A. MARAYA
REPORTER

TINIAN—The Senate yesterday expedited the confirmation of the governor’s board appointees, Benita A. Manglona to the Marianas Public Lands Authority and Martin DLG. San Nicolas to the Marianas Visitors Authority, despite the absence of standing committee reports to support the action.

Senate President Joaquin G. Adriano later explained that the Committee on Executive

Appointments and Government Investigations, chaired by Sen. Paterno S. Hocog, had prepared the reports, only that they were not readily available for distribution in yesterday’s Tinian session.

There was urgency in moving forward with the confirmation, Adriano noted, in that Manglona and San Nicolas’ membership in the MPLA and MVA boards, respectively, are crucially needed to achieve a quorum.

The EAGI normally prepares and presents to the full Senate a report on the governor’s nominee,

with a recommendation to either reject or endorse the appointee’s nomination. The committee arrives at the recommendation after scrutinizing the requirements submitted by the nominee, including the resume stating his/her credentials, statement of financial interests, and drug test receipt.

“The reports are there. It’s just that we don’t have a copy for all the members. So we went ahead and confirmed them. It’s critical to have a quorum with the board of MVA, that’s why we

confirmed him [San Nicolas] this morning. And also, Benita Manglona for MPLA. They [MPLA board] need another member to have a quorum to proceed with all these land claims. There was a sense of urgency,” said Adriano.

San Nicolas, confirmed to represent Tinian in the MVA board, expressed gratitude for the support that the Senate and the appointing authority bestowed on him.

“I feel good,” he said in an interview after the confirmation.

The new MVA board member previously served as a member of the Commonwealth Development Authority for five years. He was also a part of the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission for six years, two years of which he was chairman.

Now retired, San Nicolas said fulfilling his duties as MVA board member would be his main focus.

Manglona, confirmed to represent Rota in the MPLA board, was previously nominated to join the Commonwealth Tele-

communications Commission board. Gov. Juan N. Babauta, however, withdrew her nomination from CTC and instead appointed her to be a member of the MPLA board.

Sen. Thomas P. Villagomez lamented the withdrawal of Manglona’s nomination from the CTC board, citing pressing telecommunication issues that are pending. The Saipan senator, however, said that he is glad that Manglona would still be able to offer her expertise and assistance by being a member of the MPLA board.

Tibbets to highlight commemoration event

Retired General Paul Tibbets, the man who piloted the Enola Gay, will return to the islands that launched his flight on August 6, 1945—a flight that changed the course of history.

General Tibbets will be the keynote speaker at the 60th Commemoration of the Battles of Saipan and Tinian, an event to be held on both islands in mid-June, 2004.

The Mariana Islands, specifically Saipan, Tinian and Guam, were key pieces of real estate for American troops in World War II. The land battle began on June 15, 1944, when U.S. Marines and Infantry fought through a hail of bullets to set foot on Saipan. The battle raged for weeks until Saipan was finally declared secure on July 9, at a cost of more than 3,000 American lives, over 30,000 Japanese, and over 900 of the local population.

Once the islands were secured and runways constructed, the Americans launched B-29 Bomber raids against mainland Japan. At one point, Northfield on Tinian became the busiest airport in the world, with planes taking off every 45 seconds. Yet the Japanese were undeterred and vowed to fight the Americans with every citizen of Japan.

The decision to use America’s “secret weapon” was left up to President Harry Truman. If the U. S. could avoid an invasion of the Japanese homeland, it was estimated that one million American lives would be spared. So, on August 6, 1945, General Tibbets and his crew took off from Tinian in the Enola Gay bound for Hiroshima. The resulting explosion, coupled with the similar bombing of Nagasaki three days later, convinced the Japanese that continuing the war was futile. They unconditionally

surrendered to the Americans on September 2, 1945, thus bringing an end to World War II.

The commemoration of the 60th anniversary of World War II will be held on Saipan and Tinian from June 10 to June 16, 2004. Many veterans of the campaign, their families and friends, historians and others interested in the War in the Pacific will be returning to honor the men and women of America’s “greatest generation”.

To learn more about the event or to find out how to attend, visit www.worldwarii.info.

This is a file photo of Retired General Paul Tibbets, the man who piloted the Enola Gay on August 6, 1945. General Tibbets will be the keynote speaker at the 60th Commemoration of the Battles of Saipan and Tinian, an event to be held on both islands in mid-June, 2004.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Random curfew checks continue

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

The Department of Public Safety raided several hotspots believed to be haven of criminal activities in light of the beefed up enforcement of curfew hours.

According to DPS spokesperson Sgt. Tom Blas, Jr., authorities are zeroing in on areas where criminal activities are frequently reported such as Garapan, Koblerville, Chalan Kanoa, and Susupe, adding that the operation will continue as long as curfew hours are in effect.

“We will continue our operations against curfew violators as long as curfew hours are in effect. We will randomly check on areas with high incidents of crimes and the operations will be done simultaneously,” he explained.

Blas warned parents and guardians of minors to keep track of their children since appropriate charges would also be slapped against them. “We would like to inform the parents and guardians of minors to be aware of the curfew hours. If these kids are still loitering during the curfew hours, they would be arrested,” he stressed.

The DPS said that minors who are 15 and under should not be out on the street between 9pm and 5am Mondays through Thursdays, and from 10pm to 5am Fridays through Sundays.

For minors 16 years old and above, curfew hours are from 10pm to 5am Mondays through Thursdays, and from 11pm to 5am Fridays through Sundays. During these times, minors should not be seen loitering outside.

Anti-littering signs installed

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

The Coastal Resources Management Office has installed close to 50 beach signs on Saipan, Tinian and Rota as part of the campaign against illegal dumping.

Benny Pangelinan, coastal resources coordinator at the CRMO, said the project was made possible through a \$26,140-grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Pangelinan said the project is a message about the government’s stance on environmental protection. The signs are installed on Saipan’s popular beaches.

“A clean environment is one of the CNMI’s major attractions—it brings in more tourists and, at the same time, helps deter crime,” he said. “The CRMO is continuing [its] public education program to inform the people of [its] vital role in ensuring that our islands remain beautiful and clean through these newly imple-

During an operation conducted over the weekend, authorities arrested at least 15 minors for curfew violations. The operations were made in response to complaints of increasing criminal activities involving juveniles.

Members of the DPS Criminal Investigation Bureau, Thief Apprehension Select Coalition and Juvenile Unit surveyed several areas in Chalan Kanoa, Garapan, Susupe, and Koblerville, during which several minors were picked up due to various offenses that include court orders and curfew violations, as well as possession of tobacco and alcoholic beverages.

“The presence of these youngsters out on the street increased, resulting in the rising number of crimes involving minors. The operations were launched to help curb crimes committed by juveniles,” Blas said.

He noted that the operations were also intended to educate youngsters on the curfew law, as well as deter the youths’ involvement in illegal activities. “Many youngsters have been seen late in the night loitering around establishments and villages.”

Blas cited the need to intensify the information campaign on the existence of the curfew law, adding that a great number of minors are not aware that such a law exists.

In light of the ongoing crackdown against curfew violators, the DPS warned parents, legal guardians, sponsors and any adult in custody of a minor, especially those with conditions from the court, to be extra aware of the curfew hours.

mented signs designed to stop littering in our beaches.”

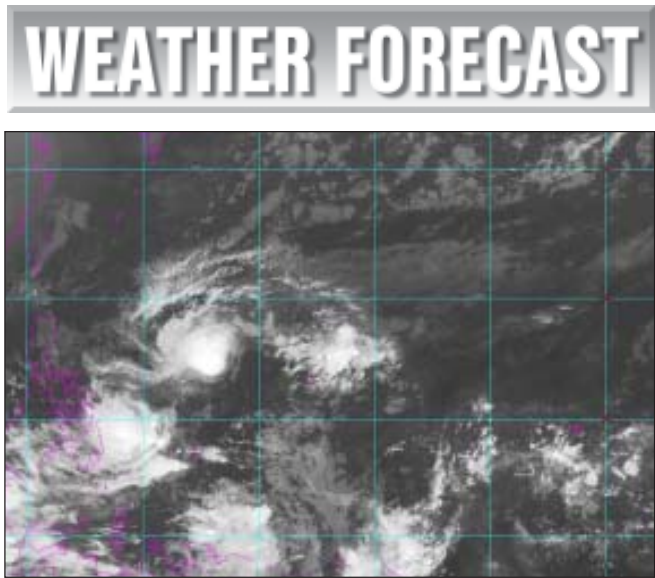
Pangelinan said 31 signs are up on Saipan. Seven signs have been put up on Tinian, while eight others stand on Rota.

The signs advise the public to dispose of its trash in the trash bins. The message has translations in several languages, including Chamorro, Carolinian, Filipino, Japanese, Korean and Chinese.

On Saipan, the CRMO installed the signs at the following beach sites: Kilili, Micro, San Jose, Susupe, Coral Ocean Point, Paupau, among others.

“We’d like you to keep in mind that dirty areas repel tourists and encourage criminal activity. So please, put your litter where they belong—in the trash cans,” the CRMO said.

Earlier, the Division of Environmental Quality also disclosed putting up beach signs. These, however, inform the public of the marine water quality of the beach sites where they stand.



PICTURE TIME: 1:00 A.M., DECEMBER 23, 2003
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A monsoon trough extends from 5N130E to a weak circulation near 5N135E then ends near 10N139E. Strong low-level convergence along the trough is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms northwest of Palau and Yap in an area bounded by 18N130E to 19N140E to 14N140E to 6N134E to 5N130E then back to 17N130E...and across the Mariana Islands and Chuuk between the equator and 18N from 140E to 154E. Further east...trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers north of Kosrae between 5N and 9N from 161E to 164E...and across southern half of the Marshall Islands between the equator and 10N from 166E to 180. Low clouds are found about 300 miles north and northwest of a dissipating shear line from 25N180E to 19N145E.



SAIPAN AND TINIAN
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 15-20 mph. Highs near 80. Lows near 70.



GUAM AND ROTA
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 20 mph. Highs near 80. Lows near 70.



PALAU
Partly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: Southeast at 10 kt.



POHNPEI
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: East at 10 kt.



YAP AND ULITHI
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 10 kt.



KOSRAE
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: Northeast at 10 kt. or less



CHUUK
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 10 kt.



MAJURO
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15 kt.

	CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
	Auckland	Partly Cloudy	71F (22C)	53F (12C)
	Beijing	Sunny	49F (9C)	23F (-5C)
	Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	75F (24C)	64F (18C)
	Honolulu	Sunny	83F (28C)	71F (22C)
	London, England	Cloudy	52F (11C)	41F (5C)
	Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	64F (18C)	49F (9C)
	Manila	Partly Cloudy	85F (29C)	71F (22C)
	Melbourne	Sunny	76F (24C)	59F (15C)
	Miami	Partly Cloudy	77F (25C)	66F (19C)
	New York City	Partly Cloudy	44F (7C)	32F (0C)
	Osaka	Partly Cloudy	52F (11C)	36F (2C)
	Paris	Cloudy	46F (8C)	36F (2C)
	Pusan	Sunny	59F (15C)	43F (6C)
	Rome	Sunny	44F (7C)	32F (2C)
	Salem, Oregon	Partly Cloudy	46F (8C)	34F (1c)
	San Francisco	Rain	56F (13C)	44F (7C)
	Seoul	Partly Cloudy	48F (9C)	32F (0C)
	Tokyo, Japan	Partly Cloudy	54F (12C)	43F (6C)
	Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	44F (7C)	28F (-2C)

Bomb detonation closes Marpi on Friday

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

The Marpi area will be closed to traffic and the general public on Friday, when the U.S. Navy and the Emergency Management Office detonate over 1,000 pounds of World War II ordnance.

In a public advisory, the EMO said the closure of the Marpi area would be from 8am to 4pm. The scheduled detonation begins by 10am.

“The only area that will not be closed off will be Suicide Cliff as that will be the main viewing point for the detonation. The public’s access to Suicide Cliff will be allowed only at the road leading up to the Far East Broadcasting antenna into Suicide Cliff for viewing purposes,” the EMO said.

The Department of Public Safety would set up security posts at the area to control traffic movement, the EMO said.

The EMO had also scheduled detonation activities on both Friday and Saturday, but Director Rudolfo Pua said the second day of the activity would most likely be a mopping-up operation.

Pua disclosed that over 1,000 lbs. of assorted ordnance would be detonated Friday, including projectiles, mortars, grenades and blasting caps. The EMO will also dispose of fireworks that have been stored at the agency’s bunker in Marpi.

The Navy’s Explosive Ordnance Disposal team from Guam already arrived on-island, meeting with EMO staff yesterday. All is set for the

activity, but Pua had said the Navy would decide if the schedule would be cancelled should it rain on Friday.

Designated as detonation site is the Laderan Laggun Cliffline located south of the Marpi landfill. “The grid coordinates

are 15 degrees 16.11 minutes North and 145 degrees 49.26 minutes East and 5,000 feet above sea level.”

The EMO warned the public—including tour operators, commercial pilots and fishermen—to stay at least one mile away from the site when the detonation activities are ongoing.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency had issued

the EMO an emergency permit pursuant to the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act to allow the detonation and open burning of the ordnance, saying that the wastes pose an imminent threat to human health and the environment.

Foul play ruled out in worker’s death

Authorities ruled out foul play as the cause of death of a nonresident worker who was discovered dead inside his workplace in Garapan two weeks ago, police disclosed yesterday.

PO3 Tom Blas Jr., Department of Public Safety spokesperson, said that Dr. Aurelio Espinola conducted an autopsy on the body of Fang Yue-Sheng who was found dead in front of his computer inside the Linson Garment building last Oct. 31.

Yue-Sheng was found injured around 12am of Oct. 31 and was immediately brought to the Commonwealth Health Center where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

According to the autopsy report released by Espinola, Yue-Sheng suffered from ruptured splenic aneurisms in his pancreas area.

The autopsy was conducted to shed light on the circumstances surrounding Yue-Sheng’s death. He was at his jobsite when the incident happened.

According to the report, he was noticed slumped in front of his computer and his co-workers tried to revive him but had little response. (*Edith G Alejandro*)

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Opinion

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIV, Issue No. 071

Published daily at 2/F Century Insurance Building,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
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EDITORIAL

Haiti looks to the world

The United States moves to topple the isolated president of a disordered nation but fails to plan adequately for the violent aftermath, even though it was widely anticipated. U.S. and other military forces are too few and ill prepared to maintain order.

Haiti is not Iraq. It is smaller, its problems are more quantifiable and it is not sundered by religious and ethnic divisions. The swearing-in Monday of Interim President Boniface Alexandre, the Supreme Court's chief justice, was at least a stopgap step toward establishing stability.

Another difference between Haiti and Iraq is that the U.S. did not directly overthrow its leader, former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, although France and the United States issued a clear message to Aristide to leave. Unfortunately, his departure has not brought Haitians much comfort.

The United States has about 1,700 Marines in Haiti patrolling Port-au-Prince, the capital, along with the Haitian national police. France, Brazil, Canada and others are sending hundreds of troops. But the armed followers of rebel leader Guy Philippe and the thugs who were Aristide's enforcers still roam the streets with virtual impunity.

Even in the capital, U.S. forces were unable to prevent gunmen presumed loyal to Aristide from mortally wounding seven people Sunday during a march celebrating Aristide's removal. If the U.S. and others can stem Haiti's anarchic slide, then a United Nations peacekeeping force will have a chance of success. But the U.S. and its allies can't expect the U.N. to solve the mess from the bottom up, in either the military or civilian realms.

As Jan Egeland, the top U.N. official for emergency relief, said Friday, a shortfall in aid helped lead to Haiti's collapse, and help is now desperately needed. The U.N. plans to make a new plea for emergency assistance today, and Britain is delivering 30,000 tons of medical supplies.

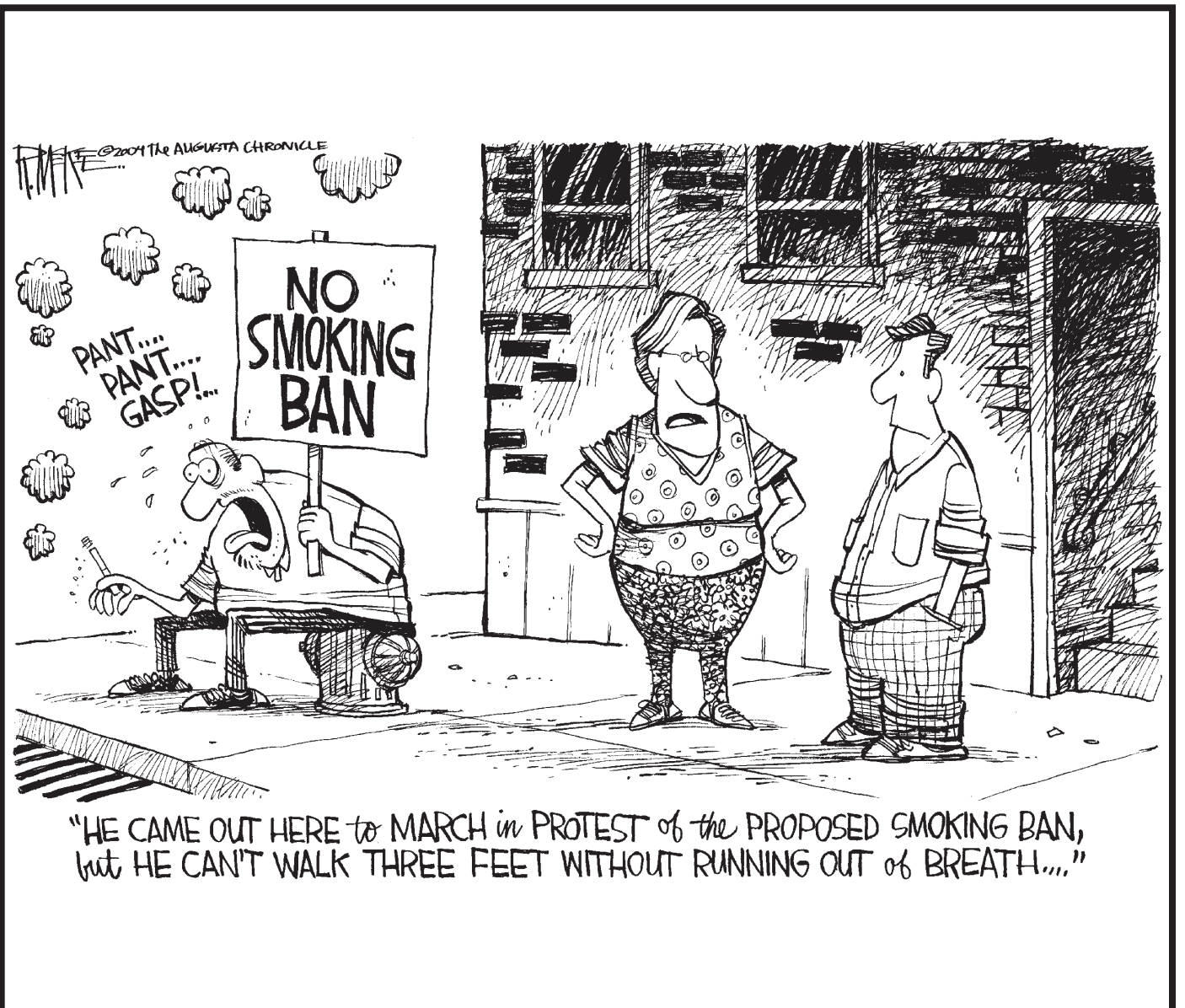
President Bush should consult with the Caribbean countries under the banner of Caricom to draw up a longer-term plan of civil aid that can help Haiti emerge from squalor and desperation. Caricom has been wary of Washington's intentions since Aristide's departure and will need persuading.

Haiti lacks everything: an honest police force, decent schools, sufficient food and viable political parties that don't rely on thugs and corruption to enforce their will. The National Endowment for Democracy, whose activities Bush is planning to expand in the Middle East, could play a support role in setting up parties and elections.

Haiti has long provoked spasms of international alarm followed by years of neglect. The blind eye of Haiti's hemispheric neighbors made the current catastrophe worse than it needed to be.

U.S. armed forces are already overextended in Iraq. The question is whether nations that see the United States as an international lone wolf will freely offer the sustained assistance that Haiti requires.

(c) 2004, Los Angeles Times



Bush sets the right course in control of land mines

By RICHARD L. GARWIN
Special to the Los Angeles Times

As a physicist who has spent a half-century working for national security and arms control, I am dismayed by many acts of the Bush administration. But the administration deserves credit for one thing that is very right: its new policy on land mines.

Once laid, land mines explode when they sense a target. The key to their military usefulness is that only they can provide defense throughout the duration of a battle or even a war. But that is also the key to their humanitarian menace. Many mines remain active indefinitely. Long after the battle has ended, they may destroy civilian lives, limbs, land and livelihood.

But mines need not remain dangerous. They can contain timing mechanisms that will cause them to self-destruct after a set period, and they can be powered by batteries, so that, if self-destruction fails, the battery will die and the mine will be deactivated. Most mines now in U.S. stockpiles are designed to self-destruct four hours after emplacement; some can be set for as long as 30 days, the maximum for such mines allowed under the Convention on Conventional Weapons, which the United States has ratified. The reliability of the self-destruction mechanisms is high: In more than 65,000 tests, no activated U.S. mine has failed to self-destruct.

The essence of Bush's new policy is that after 2010, the United States will no longer use any persistent land mines—that is, mines that do not self-destruct or self-deactivate—and after 2004, the United States will not use nonmetallic mines, which are difficult to detect. The measures cover not only antipersonnel land mines but also those that target vehicles.

The United States is the first major nation to take these humanitarian steps, which make it the world's moral leader in land mine policy.

Nevertheless, some have criticized the new policy because it doesn't include joining the so-called Mine Ban Treaty. In fact, there is no Mine Ban Treaty. This misnomer is sometimes applied

to the 1997 Ottawa Convention, which bans antipersonnel mines but freely permits all types of anti-vehicle mines.

Dividing the land mine universe this way makes little sense. Decades after a conflict has ended, persistent anti-vehicle mines continue to kill people in buses and trucks. By causing road closures, they prevent refugees from returning to their lands and keep humanitarian assistance from getting to where it is needed. Currently, for example, 70 percent of the main roads in Angola are blocked by anti-vehicle mines.

Thus, there are now two partial mine bans: the Ottawa Convention, which permits only anti-vehicle mines, and the new U.S. policy that permits only self-destructing mines.

To compare them, imagine two minefields: one laid by the United States and one by, say, Belgium, a signatory of the Ottawa Convention. Both are deadly weapons of war. The U.S. minefield contains antipersonnel and anti-vehicle mines that self-destruct in 30 days or less.

The other contains anti-vehicle mines that will be active indefinitely, and the Ottawa Convention also permits it to contain some anti-vehicle mines that are nonmetallic and that will explode if a person accidentally kicks one and turns it over.

Three months later, the U.S. minefield will be perfectly safe. But after three months, or three years or three decades, the Ottawa-compliant field will be as dangerous as the day it was laid. Clearly, the Bush plan is more humanitarian than the Ottawa Convention.

Why not also join the Ottawa Convention? That would do little more to reduce post-combat civilian casualties, but because it would ban the use of all antipersonnel mines, it would gravely increase the risk to our ground forces during combat, and to those civilians they may be sent to protect.

The Bush White House has done the right thing, setting a course the world would do well to follow. The U.S. plan is what the Ottawa Convention should have been.

Garwin, of the Council on Foreign Relations, led the Arms Control and Nonproliferation Advisory Board in the Clinton administration.

Keeping the collar through the crisis

By JAMES MARTIN
Special to The Baltimore Sun

Lately, being a Catholic has grown increasingly difficult. So has being a priest.

The recent release of the long-awaited report on sexual abuse in the Catholic Church made for especially grim reading. The first independent investigation of abuse in the American church, supervised by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, concluded that 4 percent of U.S. priests—that is, 4,392 clergy members—were accused of abuse between 1950 and 2002. In the ordination class of 1970, one of every 10 priests faced at least one accusation.

While the data represent only those accused (the number of substantiated claims is lower) and are difficult to compare with other populations (the Catholic Church is the only major organization or profession to release such figures), the extent of the crimes is nonetheless appalling.

Since the crisis exploded in January 2002, I often have been asked how I can represent an institution that is so obviously flawed. It is a fair challenge, recalling the Rev. Andrew Greeley's trenchant observation that the question today is not why so many Catholics leave the church, but why they stay.

I stay in the priesthood for a host of reasons.

The first is that I freely made a vow to God to remain a priest for the rest of my life.

The second reason is that, like anyone who reads church history, I am not surprised by the presence of scandal and even grave sin in the church. The church, while giving the world figures such as Augustine, Francis of Assisi, Teresa of Avila, Pope John XXIII and Mother Teresa, has also served up its share of fools and villains, some of whom held high offices.

St. Peter, by tradition the first pope, sinned famously—denying Jesus three times before the crucifixion. Centuries later, Renaissance popes such as Alexander VI (of the rapacious Borgia family) and Paul III were widely known to have granted ecclesiastical offices to their illegitimate children and grandchildren.

While historical precedent does not excuse the contemporary crimes of abusive priests or the sins of those bishops who reassigned them, it stands as a stark reminder that the institutional church is made up of sinful men and women, and is therefore constantly in need of change and reform. This theological model of the church was underlined by the Second Vatican Council in its 1963 "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church," a key document of the reforming council: "The Church ... at once holy and always in need of purification, follows constantly the path of penance and renewal."

Yet it is insufficient simply to admit sinfulness. Catholic theology has long held that a penitent also needs to show a "firm purpose of amendment" and willingness to undergo penance.

There are some signs that penance and reconciliation in the American Catholic Church have already begun.

In July, the newly appointed archbishop of Boston, Sean P. O'Malley, declared his desire to work for reconciliation, regardless of the cost. "People's lives are more important than money," he said simply.

O'Malley's subsequent swift resolution of legal settlements, his willingness to sell the archbishop's palatial residence and his outreach to victims of clerical abuse demonstrate that it is possible to work for reconciliation with compassion, intelligence and even speed. January's report from the National Review Board, which showed that 90 percent of all dioceses are now fully compliant with the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People implemented by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, was also a largely positive sign.

In other words, I remain hopeful. Still, even if I failed to discern signs of hope, I could no more leave the priesthood or the church in a time of crisis than I could abandon my own family during a difficult time.

Finally, I remain in the priesthood for a simpler reason. I love being a priest and believe that it is where I am meant to be. It is a privilege to celebrate Mass, hear confessions, marry couples, baptize children and anoint the sick. As the Trappist monk Thomas Merton wrote around the time of his ordination in 1949, I feel that the priesthood is "the one great secret for which I had been born."

During the ordination Mass for priests, the presiding bishop addresses the newly ordained. "Let the example of your life," he says, "attract the followers of Christ, so that by words and actions you may build up the house which is God's church."

That's a good goal for priests during this painful period in church history, and over the next few decades I hope to help rebuild a church desperately in need of repair.

The Rev. Martin is a Jesuit priest and associate editor of America, a national Catholic magazine.

The Phoenix

In Egyptian mythology the fabled Phoenix was a beautiful gold-and-scarlet male bird with a melodious cry, and said to be as large as an eagle. Only one Phoenix existed at any time, and it would live for at least five centuries. Before its life would end, it built a nest of frankincense and cassia twigs, ignited itself, and the firebird would be consumed in the flames.

A new Phoenix would miraculously spring to life from the ashes, or some say from the flames. It would gather the ashes of its predecessor, encapsulate them in a precious egg of Myrrh, and fly it to the altar of the Egyptian God of the Sun in the city of Heliopolis Egypt where it was carefully deposited.

To the ancient Egyptians, the Phoenix represented immortality. This desire to live forever was not only strong in the Egyptian civilization, its symbolism spread to China, and the Mediterranean world of the Greeks and Romans. The Phoenix was also compared to undying Rome, and it appears on the coinage of the late Roman Empire as a symbol of the Eternal City.

According to some scholars, the lesson of the Phoenix is that in the midst of prosperity and strength, we need a renewal phase or a recycling designed to interrupt the daily norms, allowing a rebirth and regeneration. In business, the Phoenix could represent renewal of the organization, continued existence, or even being restored after suffering a serious setback.

Life, business, and society moves in regular cycles like the ebb and swell of the ocean tide. Activities follow what is called the "S-curve" or sigmoid curve. It looks like the letter "S" that has fallen forward. A new endeavor begins at the start of the highest point of the "S" on the left side and then moves down through a learning or incubation stage. It then moves back up the curve in the introduction and growth phase before it levels off in the maturity phase. The last stage is decline, where an entity starts to decay and lose vitality. Without any change, the decline phase will eventually end in termination or extinction.

This curve applies to practically every aspect of business, personal life, government, society, and the histories of nations and empires. It even applies to the CNMI as it has economically grew, peaked, and began a decline.

This is where the fabled Phoenix can be useful as a metaphor for continued growth. After its life reached a peak and it began to decline, the firebird would self-immolate so it could resurrect as a stronger, renewed creature. A business must find its core strengths

By RIK and JANEL VILLEGAS

Rik is a business instructor at NMC and Janel is the owner of Positively Outrageous Results. They have consulted with over 400 businesses in 40 different industries. For better business results go to BizResults.biz to read previous articles.



and then refine itself into a stronger, more dynamic organization. This may require taking a hard look at the business model and making needed changes to redefine its purpose for existence.

The CNMI should look at other cities that have risen from the ashes of economic uncertainty and rose to heights of grandeur. Phoenix, Arizona, like its name, rose from the dust when in 1950 it was the fifty-eighth-largest U.S. city. Over fifty years later Phoenix has risen from a small city to be ranked fourteenth, ahead of former city giants Cleveland and St. Louis.

According to economists, the CNMI has passed its peak period, and has settled into a plateau that will continue as our status quo. Barring a regeneration symbolic of the Phoenix, this prediction will remain unchallenged. However, just as some businesses we have worked with on Saipan have been able to achieve sustained growth during this sluggish economy, the CNMI has the capability to "rise from the ashes" to become an island paradise of greatness.

The greatness of a city, community, or island is not limited to its population or buildings. Likewise, their products or facilities do not define great businesses. True greatness comes from the heart and soul of an enterprise or community. The uniqueness in their sounds, smells, and sights; along with an intangible spirit that comes from its people are what defines the character of an outstanding organization or community.

The CNMI can rise from the ashes to become an even greater more viable Commonwealth. Our tropical island setting provides an ideal "nest" from which to renew. The people, and public and private organizations make up the collective consciousness; and as individuals engage in self-renewal and as businesses seek to continuously improve, the CNMI can rise from the "ashes" to achieve greater power and prosperity than was previously realized.

No easy answer to the no-jobs recovery riddle

By JAY HANCOCK
The Baltimore Sun

The U.S. economy rolled deeper into unknown territory last week. For those of us on board, things getting more than a little weird and scary.

On Friday, the nation posted another month of miserable job growth, the Labor Department reported. Payrolls expanded by only 21,000 jobs for February, a puny portion of the 125,000 jobs expected by some very smart Wall Street economists.

America is no stranger to meager employment gains and occasional jags of overall employment loss, but we're supposed to be in a recovery, for crying out loud.

Gross domestic product, which tracks the output of goods and services and is the most widely accepted gauge of economic health, has been growing at a scorching, 1999-style pace.

But corporate hiring departments have turned out the lights.

The official "recovery" from the 2001 recession is more than two years old, but the United States has 718,000 fewer jobs than when the recession ended. What recovery?

We've never seen anything like this. Not since the government started counting jobs in 1939 has the nation grown its gross domestic product by this amount and for this long with so little to show in putting people to work.

Frodo, I don't think we're in Hobbiton anymore.

What would the jobs picture look like if GDP were shrinking?

Many people expected some sort of "jobless recovery" as the nation recuperated from the popped stock bubble and the terrorist attacks, but this is ridiculous.

The term, "jobless recovery," was coined a decade ago after corporations seized on computerized productivity improvements to increase output without adding proportional numbers of workers.

But the jobless recovery of the early 1990s lasted only about a year and a half—from the recession's end to when the economy started adding at least 150,000 or 200,000 jobs a month, which is the minimum analysts believe is needed for sustainable growth.

This jobless recovery is 27 months old with no end in sight. At February's rate of growth it'll take until 2013 before the United

States boasts as many jobs as it had in March 2001, at the peak of the previous expansion.

"This is bad news. I don't even know where to begin," University of Maryland economist Peter Morici said Friday after looking at the job report. "We're not getting the normal multiplier effect" that usually comes with economic expansion.

Some 8 million people were jobless in February. It would have been higher, but many folks are so discouraged they've given up looking for jobs—"left the work force," in government parlance. They are not counted as unemployed, which is why the jobless rate stayed at a deceptively low 5.6 percent.

The average duration of unemployment in February was more than five months—the longest since 1983.

Everybody's confused. The stock market first fell on Friday—no jobs. Bad for consumers. Than it soared—low interest rates forever! Then it slumped into bafflement.

The National Bureau of Economic Research, the semi-official arbiter of business cycles, doesn't even know what a recession is anymore. First it decided job growth was the hallmark of business expansion. Then last October it declared GDP growth was what really mattered. Don't be surprised if it starts having third thoughts.

One explanation for the jobless riddle is technology-driven productivity. As in the early 1990s, automation and centralization are allowing companies to churn out more products with fewer workers.

But there can be little doubt that the transfer of U.S. jobs overseas is part of the equation. Manufacturing positions have been moving to Mexico and Asia for years. But now, thanks to the Internet, service jobs such as insurance processing and tech support are shifting overseas, too.

That's surprising and worrisome. Service jobs were supposed to be more or less bulletproof against foreign competition.

But then, what else is new? Surprising and worrisome are what this economy is all about. Non-importable products have become importable. Output grows while employment doesn't. Wage and salary growth is almost flat. Profligate government spending and the lowest interest rates since the 1950s haven't helped.

We need a map to tell us where all this goes. But there isn't one.

Hancock is a financial columnist for The Sun.

Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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Guamanians line up for war compensation

At 76, Nicolas Pangelinan has no trouble remembering and talking about how he suffered when Japanese forces occupied Guam during World War II.

"One time someone caught one of our workers sleeping," said Pangelinan, recalling how he and other Guam residents were forced to work in the fields. "So we were all forced to line up and slap each other. Oh, the turmoil we had to go through."

The Agana Heights resident's story is one of many that the Guam War Claims Review Commission, which opened its office at the Chamorro Village in Hagatña, wants to know about.

About 20,000 people lived on Guam during the Japanese occupation more than a half-century ago.

As one of the estimated 10,000 still alive, Pangelinan can visit the Chamorro Village office and fill out the commission's questionnaire for survivors.

"What we're trying to do is get a census, what kind of injuries were suffered by the people of Guam," said Benjamin J. Cruz, former justice of the Guam Supreme Court and member of the review commission.

The focus of the questionnaire, in accordance with the Guam War Claims

Review Commission Act, is to discover instances of infliction of death, personal injury, forced labor, forced march and internment. Forced prostitution and rape would fall under personal injury.

After the questionnaires are turned in, public hearings will take place at the Guam Legislature on Dec. 8 and 9 to allow war survivors to talk about their experience.

As for survivors and their relatives off island, the commission will send out letters to Guam clubs in the mainland, and ask them to help spread the word about the commission's effort. Cruz said that in the last Census, there were about 33,000 Chamorros in California.

"Depending on the responses we get, we may have a hearing in each of the states," Cruz said.

According to Pacific Daily News files, Japan invaded Guam in 1941. For the next three years, residents were subjected to atrocities including torture and internment, files state.

A draft commission report for the U.S. Secretary of the Department of the Interior is due May 9, 2004. On June 9, 2004, the final report will be presented to Congress.

A decision will be made whether there was a disparity in compensation.

Cruz said Congress has asked for a report to see if reparations need to be made.

"Hopefully because they're the ones asking us to do it, they'll be more willing to address it," Cruz said.

It may be difficult for some survivors to talk about their experiences, said Tony Unpingco, commission member and former speaker of the Guam Legislature. The commission will respect anonymity requests.

"One person was telling me, as soon as someone brings up the war, the first thing in his mind would be all the dead people in front," Unpingco said.

Pangelinan said he would testify before Congress if that means his family could receive compensation for the atrocities he and his family went through.

"I wish they could put me up in Washington, D.C., and talk to them. We suffered during the Japanese occupation," he said.

Cruz said, for the sake of the survivors and their children, he wishes for a speedy process.

"I hope we can deal with reparations once and for all before everyone passes," Cruz said. "And they can go peacefully knowing that it's been addressed." (PDN/PIR)

TOURISTS

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Haneda and the resumption of flights from Kansai.

The Japanese market remained strong with 27,125 visitors, posting a 16-percent increase compared to October 2002's 23,407.

The Chinese market showed improved performance by posting a high 59 percent rise, with a total of 736 visitors last month. Considered as a surging market before the SARS outbreak caused an international travel scare, Chinese arrivals indicated a takeoff after plunging to almost zero.

Arrivals from Guam totaled 1,799, reflecting a 31-percent growth.

The CNMI's second largest tourism market—Korea—retained its rank. The market had 5,353 visitors entering the

CNMI last month, although the figure was actually 25 percent lower than October 2002's 7,297.

"Since February 2003, visitors from Korea had declined due to the termination of the Korean Airlines' direct flights, compounded by the Iraqi conflict and SARS outbreak," the MVA said. "Despite the decline, the Korean market still maintained its position as the CNMI's second largest visitor market."

But the MVA assured that it has been working to alleviate the situation following the pullout of Korean Airlines flights. The MVA said it has been stimulating travel demand from Korea by working with industry partners in the Asian country. It cited the October visit of some 1,200 individuals from Yoon's English Academy, a major English education provider in Korea.

"The group, which consisted of

employees from the academy, came to Saipan in segments of 150 to 250 as their reward for their exceptional on-the-job performance at the institution. As a result, to accommodate this group, Asiana Airlines had seven extra flights for the month of October 2003," the MVA said.

The MVA said it has tied up with Asiana Airlines to come up with an incentive plan for Korean travel agents. The Volume Incentive Program commenced in September 1 and will run through December 31, 2003, the MVA said.

"In the month of October, three companies in Korea exceeded the 10 percent quota while another company exceeded the 20 percent quota. These four companies will receive advertising support from the MVA for advertising the destination and incentive tickets from the carrier to Saipan for their excellent performance," it added.

the admiral is based," said the governor.

A delegation of eight members, including Babauta, is expected to meet with Fargo on Nov. 24.

The governor's party will include Callaghan, Military and Veterans Affairs Special Assistant Frank Cepeda, CNMI's Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army Edward Manibusan, two unnamed members of the House and Senate, Bishop Tomas Camacho and Public Lands commissioner Henry Hofschneider.

Wright lacked state review as mandated by the CNMI Constitution.

It means, he said, that the NMC is not authorized by the CNMI Legislature to incur a public debt.

The NMC intends to use the loan money for the renovation of La Fiesta complex (\$5 million) and for purchase of collateral equipment, costing some \$3 million.

The NMC recently purchased La Fiesta Shopping Mall in San Roque for its Pacific Gateway project, which begins in fall 2004. The program aims to attract foreign students interested in studying in the U.S.

The college entered into a \$7.5-million purchase contract of the property, using a \$3.5-million deposit from a grant through the Governor's Office. The remaining \$4 million shall be paid in 20 years at an annual payment of \$200,000 beginning Oct. 2004.



Remengesau ponders gambling bills

KOROR (Palau Horizon/PIR)—The new casino gaming bill approved by both houses of the national legislature now awaits President Tommy Remengesau's signature.

However, Remengesau maintains serious reservations regarding casino legislation.

The measure passed by lawmakers calls for a limited gambling industry in Palau.

A gaming industry, the lawmakers said, would bring high-end tourists to Palau.

It would also create benefits to the private sector by creating new jobs, infrastructure development revenues to the country and Angaur where the proposed casino would be established.

Senate Bill 6-233 proposes to allow limited gambling in Angaur under the supervision of a National Gaming Control Commission.

The commission will "closely monitor" the effects of the gaming industry to the citizens and the environment.

The commission will then determine if the gaming industry should be expanded beyond Angaur.

Lawmakers said it is about time that Palau allows casino gambling, claiming that there is no direct evidence it would cause crimes.

In May 2002, a similar bill was approved by the Olbiil Era Kelulau and was submitted to the president for signature.

Remengesau rejected the bill, citing several concerns.

The OEK said the new legislation addresses those concerns.

Solomons police suspect paid while on run

MELBOURNE, Australia (Radio Australia/PIR)—The Solomon Islands government reportedly has paid several million Australian dollars on false claims and allowances to

police officers, among them a suspected murderer on the run.

Solomon Islands Finance Minister Francis Zama says some of the money has been recouped, but more is expected when the auditing of government finances has been completed.

Zama confirmed that a Solomon Islands police sergeant and suspect in a high profile murder case continued to be paid for seven months while on the run. He said steps to suspend the pay of Edmond Sae, who is accused of killing former police commissioner Sir Frederick Soaki, have been taken.

Police Commissioner William Morrell says nothing was done about the discrepancy earlier because the police previously lacked the will. But he says that attitude has changed with the arrival of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands.

Meanwhile, Zama says money is being deducted from other police officers' salaries as a review continues into all police allowances during the last four years.

Fiji chiefs accused of role in coups

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (RNZI/PIR)—Some of Fiji's chiefs have been accused of being behind the 1987 and 2000 coups.

Fiji TV says the accusation was made by one of Fiji's highest traditional chiefs, Adi Lady Lala Mara, the wife of the president deposed in the May 2000 coup, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara.

Opening a meeting of the great Council of Chiefs, Adi Lady Lala said the perpetrators of these events were greedy and were false prophets spreading uncertainty, threats and disharmony among the races in the country.

She did not name them but said chiefs should re-examine their role, especially in relation to promoting racial harmony in a multi-cultural nation like Fiji.

She said the coups had brought Fiji to its knees.

BABAUTA

From Page 1

admiral for the entire Pacific, he's got the biggest command in the entire world. His command includes the CNMI. I'm looking forward to that because we want to know where we are in their planning scheme," said Babauta.

Also part of the briefing's agenda is the proposed use of Pagan as a long-term military training site, the increased

use of Saipan as an R&R port for the U.S. Navy and the increased use of Tinian as a Marine training.

Babauta pitched the request for a briefing with Fargo while he was in Hawaii last month, attending the Pacific Island Leaders Conference.

"He was very gracious and agreed to give me a full blown briefing and so I'm going to invite a handful of key individuals from the CNMI to join me in Honolulu for this presentation. It's going to be at the Camp Smith where

NMC

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proclamation of Nov. 17-22 as the International Education Week and Cultural Day at the NMC.

Wright said that the loan package would allow the NMC to pay without interest in the first three years.

In a separate interview, Atalig said the NMC has up to Dec. 31, 2003 to file its application with USDA.

In its notice to NMC dated Oct. 31, 2003, the USDA-Guam said that the NMC is "eligible for funding and has a chance to compete with similar applications for other grantees."

It said a pre-conference interview with NMC is not necessary. It added that the USDA just needs to analyze in detail NMC's actual application for the funding. This, even as Saipan Rep. Stanley

Torres earlier asked the USDA to abstain from making any loan agreement with NMC until the local community college obtains authorization from the CNMI Legislature.

"I am officially asking your office to abstain from any agreements with NMC loans or USDA being a loan guarantor, until NMC obtains CNMI legislative approval," said Rep. Stanley Torres in an Oct. 22 letter to USDA Secretary Ann M. Veneman.

Torres had cited that the NMC attempted to secure a \$10-million funding assistance from the Legislature but it was denied for lack of planning and for being highly speculative.

Further, he said that NMC advertised a \$10-million loan from private lenders, but there were no takers.

Torres had also cited that a Sept. 25 USDA pre-application form signed by

FUNDING

From Page 1

respectively, stressed that the federal agency understands the local government's financial situation, disclosing that the EPA would come up with a revised compliance schedule for the dump's final closure.

"We have been very flexible and understanding. But we want to keep the momentum going," McCarroll said. "The next thing [to do is] closing the dump in a safe way, preventing leachate from contaminating the water [Saipan Lagoon]."

The EPA officials noted that the Marpi landfill and the Lower Base Refuse Transfer Station appeared to be operating well. McCarroll said the CNMI deserves credit for putting up the multi-million-dollar Marpi landfill, which is considered as the first fully compliant non-military landfill facility in the entire Pacific.

"The important step [was] to stop putting waste to the [Puerto Rico] dump," McCarroll said.

Earlier this year, the office of Lt. Gov. Diego T. Benavente, who chairs the CNMI Solid Waste Task Force, disclosed plans to rehabilitate the old dumpsite by capping it with soil and vegetation.

Last April 2003, Benavente's chief-of-staff, Felix M. Sablan, disclosed that the government was trying to identify funding sources to implement the plan that was estimated to cost between \$8 and \$10 million.

Sablan said the dump could even be converted onto a recreational facility like a baseball or soccer field.

He said the task force handpicked the plan from two other options, including the payment of monetary penalty the EPA might impose on the CNMI for non-compliance with its administrative order. He said the other option was the removal of the mountainous pile of trash, an undertaking that entails significant environmental concerns and permitting and high costs.

Located near the Saipan Lagoon, the dump towers over 90 feet on some 20 acres of land. In the early 1990s, EPA cited the CNMI for violations of the Clean Water Act, as leachate resulting from the dumpsite polluted the lagoon.

Sablan said the immediate need is the dump's minimum closure by stabilizing its slope facing the lagoon to prevent possible collapse and contamination of the water. But he said the CNMI would have to spend some \$4 million to do this, before taking on capping and vegetating the dump next.

Survivor: The financial islands

By NANCY MCKEON, DAN BEYERS and MARYANN HAGGERTY
THE WASHINGTON POST

At times, the business world of 2003 seemed as fraught with difficulty and danger as the African bush or the Pearl Islands or any of the other remote locations of the “Survivor” TV series. Instead of 39 days searching for food and drinking water in inhospitable terrain, though, the inhabitants of the Finance Islands—which include Manhattan, Washington, and every investment and retirement account in the United States—spent a whole year searching in equally unfriendly surroundings for earnings, newly tax-favored dividends and a mutual fund that wasn’t making dubious deals on the side.

But this was the year when greedy corporate honchos and duplicitous stock analysts had to step aside to make room for some new bad guys: mutual fund families that demonstrated that fund investing might not provide a level playing field for the little investor.

Apple iPod

The Apple iPod was the little gizmo that could. And what it could do was give mainstreamers a way to get with digital music technology. With the help of easy-to-manage online sites such as Apple’s iTunes Music Store, it also helped the recording industry survive online song swapping (well, yes, suing the pants off illegal downloaders probably helped, too). In December, Apple reported it had sold more than 25 million tunes, at 99 cents each.



Boeing Co.



Secret machinations of big, proud Boeing Co. haunted the aerospace giant this year. First the company admitted to possessing proprietary documents from rival Lock-

heed Martin Corp. during the bidding for a rocket-launch contract. Then it had to fire its No. 2 executive for alleged misconduct in hiring a former Pentagon official, who also was fired, amid negotiations over a contract for refueling tankers.

Chief executive Philip Condit put out fire after fire, from Boeing’s role in misjudging the damage to the space shuttle Columbia’s wing to news that Europe’s Airbus had eclipsed Boeing’s storied commercial aircraft business in size. Eventually Condit himself bailed, leaving it to his successors to rally the troops by announcing plans for a new mid-size passenger jet, the 7E7, or “Dreamliner.”

Enron

The year came to an end with several major corporate figures still walking away unscathed from the train wrecks that investigators



suspect, but have yet to prove, they caused. Kenneth Lay, once chief executive of Enron, whose precipitous 2001 collapse set off a disastrous chain of corporate events and implosions, spent the year with his lawyers as investigators continued to probe.

Ankling down the same road was Jeffrey Skilling, another former Enron chief. Ditto Bernard Ebbers, founder of WorldCom. In his fourth report on Enron, bankruptcy examiner R. Neal Batson found grounds to sue Lay and Skilling to recover millions in company loans but discovered no smoking-gun evidence that either knew about the company’s wrongdoing. Similarly, federal prosecutors have not charged Ebbers as they probe WorldCom’s accounting tricks.

Freddie Mac



Freddie Mac, the nation’s second-largest buyer of home mortgages, started the year with an accounting question and ended it with the answer,

a hard slap. Freddie, it seems, used complicated derivatives to smooth reported profits, including one year when it overestimated earnings, to the tune of about \$5 billion over three years.

That disclosure led to men overboard—the top executives, who, a report charged, used the derivatives to lessen volatility to keep Wall Street happy and ensure their own performance bonuses. The uproar triggered scrutiny of another special relationship, the government-sponsored status of Freddie and its larger competitor, Fannie Mae, that allows them access to cheaper money. Did the arrangement really mean better borrowing terms for homeowners? Barely, a Federal Reserve study found: It meant enormous clout and profit for Fannie and Freddie but saved the average home buyer maybe \$87 a year.

ctsi new year

Junk emailers, telemarketers

Direct marketing got the one-two punch consumers had been begging for.

In December, President Bush signed legislation criminalizing two favorite tactics of junk e-mailers: using fake origination addresses (making fraudulent offers tough to trace) and “scraping” Web sites for names to add to commercial mailing lists. The 24 billion annual telemarketing calls—all seemingly at dinnertime—took the other hit, by way of the national do-not-call registry. The list, which went into effect in October, had 55.6 million phone numbers registered toward year-end.

Surviving the phone assault: all those aggressive debt-counseling companies, exempted from the ban because they’re nonprofits.



Mutual fund firms



Securities and Exchange Commission said that of the 88 largest fund families, 10 percent permitted illegal late trading, 30 percent gave selective and illegal information to favored customers, 50 percent enabled quick in-and-out trades that hurt their funds and 20 percent failed to give break-point discounts investors deserved.

Some of the big names involved included Alliance Capital, Bank One, Bank of America, Fred Alger, Janus and Prudential Securities, with more likely to emerge.

Putnam Investments began 2003 as the nation’s fifth-largest mutual fund family. It ended the year as the sixth-largest, its investors having pulled \$24 billion from the firm’s management as the Boston company faced state and federal charges of trading abuse by its portfolio managers.

Putnam was only one of the mutual fund firms caught by the scandals that erupted in September. In November the

Wal-Mart

If there’s any competitor that would seem to be able to muscle its way to the top on size alone, it’s Wal-Mart Stores Inc., with more than 1.2 million U.S. employees and 3,000 Wal-Mart stores, supercenters and Sam’s Clubs in the United States alone. Wal-Mart is the nation’s biggest retailer, its biggest toy seller and its biggest grocer.

Detractors complain about the Wal-Mart economy—low-paid employees selling goods made by even lower-paid foreigners. But U.S. shoppers keep heading to the big store on the edge of town for all sorts of supplies (except CDs with dirty lyrics, which the chain won’t sell). This holiday shopping season, however, underlined that maybe the giant’s strength isn’t limitless. Sales at stores open at least a year were at the “low end” of the company’s projected 3 to 5 percent sales growth, company officials said.



WorldCom



The \$500 million penalty, the largest civil fine ever imposed by the Securities and Exchange Commission, was appropriate for what the SEC called the largest financial fraud in history. And yet WorldCom, the nation’s second-largest long-distance company, would survive its bankruptcy, its reorganization cleared by a federal judge in October. (When it exits Chapter 11, as it’s expected to early next year, the company plans to change its name to MCI.)

John Sidgmore, who became chief executive after founder Bernard Ebbers was forced to resign, presided over the biggest bankruptcy case in U.S. history. He died this month at 52.

Michael Powell

Michael Powell found himself perpetually adjusting to shifting alliances at the Federal Communications Commission this year, as the panel lurched from one divided vote to the next on some of the biggest regulatory questions of the day. The FCC chairman was on the losing end of a 3 to 2 vote to maintain rules governing local telephone competition. He barely won the day in a 3 to 2 vote to loosen media ownership rules, only to provoke howls of protest from Congress, including many prominent Republicans. The vote on News Corp.’s proposed purchase of the DirecTV satellite network? You guessed it: 3 to 2. But Powell, son of Secretary of State Colin Powell, survived to fight another day.



Trials of the rich and infamous

A number of embattled corporate chieftains spent the year awaiting their day in court. L. Dennis Kozlowski, he of the \$6,000 shower

curtain, is already on trial, defending himself against charges that he looted Tyco International when he was chief executive. Household-arts arbiter Martha Stewart lost her bid to have the government drop a securities fraud charge (her public protestations of innocence were designed to prop up her company’s falling stock price, prosecutors argued) and will go to trial on that and other counts in mid-January.

Former Enron chief financial officer Andrew Fastow, charged with dozens of counts of fraud and money laundering, is scheduled for trial on April 20. His wife, Lea Fastow, is scheduled to go on trial in February on charges that she helped her husband avoid paying taxes and improperly profited from his business partnerships.

And federal prosecutors’ Christmas gift to former WorldCom Inc. Chief Financial Officer Scott Sullivan: word that they would try to tie him to 13 kinds of accounting fraud, in addition to the 11 counts of conspiracy, bank fraud and securities fraud he faces. His Feb. 2 trial date may be postponed.



fhb new year



World

Achille Lauro hijacker Abbas dies

RAMALLAH, West Bank (AP)—Mohammed Abul Abbas, the Palestinian mastermind of the 1985 hijacking of the Achille Lauro passenger ship in which an American tourist was killed, has died in U.S. custody in Iraq, Palestinian and U.S. officials said Tuesday. He was 56.

Abbas' small Palestine Liberation Front commandeered the Italian cruise ship, demanded

the release of 50 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and threw an elderly wheelchair-bound Jewish American tourist, Leon Klinghoffer, overboard after shooting him.

Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman said that Abbas died Monday, "apparently ... of natural causes." He said there would be an autopsy.

Whitman declined to answer

further questions, including whether Abbas still was being interrogated in the period before his death.

Abbas was captured in southern Baghdad by U.S. forces in a raid in April, and lived the last 11 months of his life in American custody.

Abbas's death was initially announced by officials in Palestinian leader Yasser

Arafat's office here.

No cause of death was given either by the Palestinians or the Americans.

When Abbas was captured last spring, the Palestinian Authority demanded his release, saying the United States had pledged not to prosecute him as part of a blanket agreement not



Abbas

to press charges against Palestinians who acted against Israel before interim peace accords were signed in the 1990s.

The United States also endorsed a 1995 interim peace deal which grants PLO members immunity for violent acts committed before September

1993, when the two sides signed a mutual recognition agreement.

Abbas had been a marginal figure in the PLO of late. He was a member of the PLO's executive committee, but left in 1991. His tiny faction has very few followers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. According to Israel's Shin Bet security service, the PLF had sent some members to Iraq for military training.

Iraq constitution faces tough critics

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP)—Iraq's interim constitution, which for the first time guarantees the freedoms and human rights of Iraqis, faces a host of powerful critics: two influential ayatollahs, the leader of a powerful Shiite party and other Iraqis who dismiss it as the work of the United States and its Iraqi allies.

Criticism of the document, already shaping up as the latest in a series of recent political standoffs, places post-Saddam Hussein Iraq at a crossroads again: whether to allow sectarian politics to prevail and put the nation's unity at risk, or close ranks and continue the journey to democratic rule.

Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Husseini al-Sistani, the most influential cleric to Iraq's Shiite majority, initiated the latest episode of political wrangling. His objections to the interim charter prompted his supporters on the 25-seat Governing Council to refuse to sign the document Friday as scheduled. Citing a pressing need to safeguard national unity and push forward the political process, they signed Monday, but made clear they still have reservations about parts of the document and their wish to change them.

Al-Sistani hardened his opposition to the document Monday, and on Tuesday another grand ayatollah, Mohammed Taqi al-Modaresi, warned of civil war or dismemberment of Iraq because of the charter's adoption of a federal government system. Abdel-Aziz al-Hakim, leader of the largest Shiite political party, said the document encroached on the powers of a future parliament.

Ordinary Iraqis, meanwhile, appeared divided on the constitution—some celebrated its adoption, some said they did not know its contents, while others just rejected it outright.

"I did not understand the interim constitution. Most people don't," said Amir Ali, a university official in Baghdad. "It was America who wrote the constitution. It was America who nominated those to write it."



AP
US troops comb an area near the UN headquarters in Baghdad, Iraq, Monday March 8, 2004, following an attack by insurgents at a passing US military convoy. No one was reported injured in the attack, which occurred shortly before the Iraqi Governing Council signed an interim constitution.

Iraqi: Saddam 3 years from nukes in 1991

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP)—Iraq was three years away from becoming a nuclear power before the 1991 Gulf War, the No. 2 Iraqi scientist on the program said Tuesday.

Noman Saad Eddin al-Noaimi, a former director-general of Iraq's nuclear program, told The Associated Press that Iraq produced less than a kilogram—2.2 pounds—of highly enriched uranium before the war and U.N. inspections halted the program.



al-Noaimi

The International Atomic Energy Agency, the U.N. nuclear watchdog, considers 55 pounds the standard minimum for a rudimentary bomb.

"Producing the appropriate amount would have required at least two more years, under normal circumstances," al-Noaimi said on the sidelines of a meeting in Beirut about the repercussions of the Iraq invasion. "Putting that substance into a weapon could have taken an additional year."

Al-Noaimi was believed to be the first senior Iraqi involved in the clandestine program to disclose a specific timeframe for Iraq to acquire a nuclear bomb.

A British intelligence dossier made public in September 2002 as U.S. and British leaders were building their cases for war maintained that if U.N. sanctions against Iraq were lifted, Saddam Hussein could develop a nuclear weapon in one to two years. However, the IAEA said there was no evidence of any nuclear weapons programs.

Al-Noaimi, who retired in the late 1990s, said Saddam ordered his scientists to develop atomic weapons as early as 1987. He said other scientists may have different estimates on how close Iraq was to making the weapon.

Algerian group forging ties with al-Qaida

PARIS (AP)—An extremist group known for deadly bombings and a brutal campaign to create an Islamic state in Algeria is moving to establish stronger ties to al-Qaida, raising fears the militants may launch terrorist attacks beyond their North African territory.

The new leader of the Salafist Group for Call and Combat, an armed organization whose decade-long aim has been to overthrow the Algerian government, declared allegiance to Osama bin Laden's network in the fall.

At the time, it received little attention, but now authorities worry the Salafists could become

a dangerous affiliate of al-Qaida, which has shown an ability to work through local groups such as Jemaah Islamiyah in Southeast Asia, U.S. officials in Washington told The Associated Press.

Previously, the Salafists maintained only low-level contacts with al-Qaida and the group wasn't thought capable of projecting power far beyond Algeria's border.

Authorities also worry that Algeria—with vast stretches of Sahara desert in the remote south and long borders that are hard to monitor—could become a haven for al-Qaida members, U.S. officials told AP.

Signs of the Salafists' expansionist designs have emerged in the past year with dozens of alleged operatives arrested in Spain, Britain, the Netherlands, Italy and France—where the group is considered the top terrorist threat, French intelligence officials told AP.

The Algerian government blames the group for the kidnappings of 32 European tourists in 2003. The Algeria military said last month that it had killed several Salafists trying to sneak arms into the country with ransom money received in exchange for the freedom of 17 of the hostages.

public
auditor

Former UN exec tapped as Haiti PM

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Haiti's U.S.-backed advisory council picked a former foreign minister as the new prime minister on Tuesday, a step toward forming a transitional government in this troubled nation.

Gerard Latortue's appointment came as U.S. Marines said they would help Haitian police disarm the general population. The new program, set to begin later this week, will appeal to rebel groups and supporters of ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide who have demanded weapons be taken away from their enemies.

Efforts to bring calm to this troubled Caribbean nation followed a bloody insurgency that ousted Aristide on Feb. 29, put rebels in control of half the country and sparked a frenzy of looting and violence. At least 130 people were killed in the rebellion; reprisal killings since Aristide's ouster have left at least 300 dead.



Latortue

Unrest hit the capital again Tuesday as Aristide loyalists set up flaming barricades and stoned cars. There were no immediate reports of serious injury.

After five days of private meetings, the seven-member Council of Sages settled on Latortue, also a former U.N. official and an international business consultant.

Now Latortue and interim President Boniface Alexandre will try to work toward organizing elections and building a new government for Haiti.

Council member Dr. Ariel Henry said Latortue was chosen because the council believed he was "an independent guy, a democrat." Councilor Anne-Marie Issa described him as someone "to pull everybody together."

Latortue, who served as foreign minister in 1988, was in Miami, but was expected to fly to Haiti as soon as

Report: African Union blasts Haiti ouster

ADDISABABA, Ethiopia (AP)—The African Union has condemned the ouster of exiled Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, saying he was removed from power unconstitutionally, a newspaper reported Tuesday.

Now in exile in the Central African Republic, Aristide insists the United States abducted him and forced him to leave his troubled Caribbean nation amid a weekslong insurgency. The United States has dismissed the allegations.

The 53-member AU, which is headquartered in Addis Ababa, said the way Aristide "was removed set a dangerous precedent for duly elected persons."

It added that it wished "no action be taken to legitimize the rebel forces," according to a statement published in the Daily Monitor.

Also Tuesday, Aristide's Miami-based attorney said he asked the United States to investigate his client's ouster.

Ira Kurzban claimed the United

States was behind Aristide's Feb. 29 ouster, allegations U.S. officials have frequently denied.

"Because they were kidnapped, by officials of the United States government, a claim has been filed," Kurzban said at a news conference in Miami's Little Haiti.

A U.S. State Department official dismissed Kurzban's allegations, saying Aristide quit his office and fled on his own volition as his government collapsed.

Wednesday, council members said. If he accepts the job, Latortue would replace Prime Minister Yvon Neptune.

Neptune stayed in his post even after Aristide fled the country Feb. 29. Aristide opponents have demanded that Neptune be replaced.

Also Tuesday, CIA Director George

J. Tenet warned that in Haiti, "a humanitarian disaster or mass migration remains possible."

"A cycle of clashes and revenge killings could easily be set off, given the large number of angry, well-armed people on both sides," he told the Senate Armed Services Committee. "Impro-

ving security will require the difficult task of disarming armed groups and augmenting and retraining a national security force."

Aristide, meanwhile, has insisted from exile in Africa that he is still president of Haiti, saying he was removed from office by the U.S. government.

AP: Hamas seeks deal on Gaza Strip control

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP)—The founder of the militant group Hamas told The Associated Press on Tuesday that rival Palestinian factions and Yasser Arafat's government should work out a deal now on who will control the Gaza Strip after a proposed Israeli withdrawal later this year.

Sheik Ahmed Yassin, the Islamic group's spiritual leader, said such an arrangement would be crucial to securing and stabilizing the territory. But he stopped short of explicitly demanding a role for Hamas in controlling Gaza.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has said Israel would remove Jewish settlements and pull out of most or all of Gaza if peace efforts remain stalled. U.S. and Palestinian officials have criticized the plan, under which Israel also would impose a boundary in the West Bank, saying such moves should follow negotiations.

Analysts warn of chaos in Gaza if Israel leaves.

Since Sharon first talked of his plan last month, violence has spiked in Gaza. There have also been signs of growing anarchy, with rival armed groups and security forces battling for influence. So far, Hamas has stayed out of the fighting.

Israeli opponents of a withdrawal warn that Hamas, Israel's bitter enemy, might take control. Hamas has claimed responsibility for most of the suicide bombings over the past three years that have killed more than 450 Israelis.

In the interview with AP in his Gaza City house, Yassin did not specifically demand a post-withdrawal role for Hamas. But he clearly sees Hamas as part of the equation.

Hamas has grown increasingly popular in the poverty-stricken, coastal strip, as a main provider of welfare and medical services, while Arafat's support has dwindled. Arafat has not set foot in Gaza in more than two years; Israel has confined him to the West Bank since December 2001.

Turkey suicide attack kills 1, wounds 5

ISTANBUL, Turkey (AP)—Two suicide attackers stormed a Masonic lodge Tuesday opening fire with automatic weapons and setting off explosions that killed one person and wounded five, officials said.

One of the attackers also died and one was injured in the assault, which comes months after four suicide bombings blamed on al-Qaida killed dozens of people in Istanbul.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack, said Gov. Muammer Guler.

CNN-Turk television said a man chanting "Allah, Allah" before setting off one of the explosions.

Police identified one of the injured, Abdullah Islam, as an attacker, CNN-Turk reported, adding that he was being treated for wounds caused by explosives strapped to his body.

"Two assailants shot the guard in his feet and raked the restaurant of the lodge with gunfire, then detonated bombs," Guler told reporters. "One terrorist and one waiter was killed. The second

terrorist is injured with his arm ripped off and his guts spilled out."

About 40 people were eating in the restaurant at the time of the attack, Guler said.

Police cordoned off the area as ambulances and firefighters rushed to the scene in the residential Kartal district. One of the wounded was reported to be in critical condition, doctors said.

The Masons, a secretive society that traces its roots to medieval craft associations, are active in this predominantly Muslim but strictly secular country.

Four suicide attacks against two synagogues, the British Consulate and a British bank killed 62 people in Istanbul last year. Prosecutors have indicted 69 people suspected of belonging to a local al-Qaida cell in the case. Underground leftist and Kurdish groups also are active in Istanbul.

There are an estimated 5 million to 6 million Masons worldwide, pledged to the principles of brotherliness, charity and mutual aid.



'WE WANT OUR SCIENCE'

Hundreds of researchers take to the streets in Paris, Tuesday, March 9, 2004, after 2,000 of them resigned their administrative duties to protest funding cuts they say hobble French research and risk pushing the brightest minds to countries where science is a prestige industry. In solidarity, some 5,000 researchers wearing white lab coats marched through Paris after the scientists voted to resign, while thousands of others held protests in other French cities.

US toning down criticism of Iran nukes

VIENNA, Austria (AP)—Accepting painful compromises, the United States agreed with key European nations on Tuesday to tone down criticism of Iran for its continued nuclear secrecy.

Washington also accepted a draft resolution containing some praise of Tehran's willingness to open its nuclear programs to outside inspection.

Both sides signed off on the draft document prepared for a high-level conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency after days of grueling negotiations aimed at finding the proper mix of praise and criticism.

The United States insists Iran is interested in making nuclear weapons. Washington wanted the meeting to condemn Iran for not fully living up to pledges to reveal all past and present nuclear activities while keeping open options for future involvement by the U.N. Security Council.

France, Germany and Britain, however, wanted to focus on Iranian cooperation with the IAEA that began only after the discovery last year that Tehran had plans to enrich uranium and secretly conducted other tests with possible weapons applications over nearly two decades.

IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei told reporters negotiations continued on final language. The text of the document still must be approved by all 35 nations of the IAEA board of governors.

But with the trans-Atlantic rift resolved, the greatest hurdle to agreement on Iran appeared to be out of the way.

The compromise reflected the obstacles faced by Washington in its effort to deal harshly with Iran.

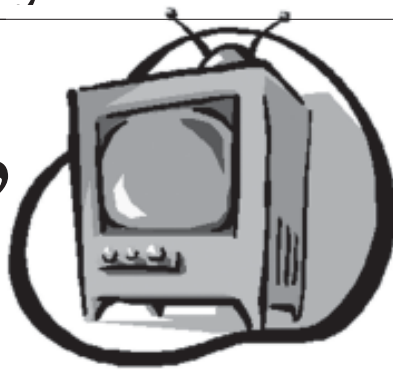
When the issue first came up before the board last year, the United States pushed to have Tehran called before the U.N. Security Council for possible sanctions, arguing that Iran had violated the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

But it has been repeatedly forced to back down in the face of widespread resistance at the board. The consensus text, made available to the Associated Press Tuesday, made no direct mention of the Security Council.

Life & Style

Life & Style

TV changing rapidly, viewers try to adjust



By DAVID BAUDER
AP TELEVISION WRITER

The natural rhythms of television used to be as dependable as leaves sprouting in spring and falling in autumn.

Broadcast networks would premiere new shows in mid-September, then replace failures when the weather turned cold. Summer was rerun season. Prime-time schedules rarely changed.

Those days are long gone.

Series pop up and disappear anytime, dispatched around the schedule like chess pieces. Some shows are rerun all the time, others never. You can't even count on a show to start at the top of an hour anymore.

For ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox, plus upstarts WB and UPN, the landscape is changing rapidly. The reasons include viewers' lackluster response to the current season, cable continuing to grab viewers and awards, and the hyper-competitiveness of TV executives.

For viewers, their trusted TV sets can be confusing. Here's a look at how things are changing and why:

New shows all year round

Gail Berman wants to put a sign up for Fox viewers: We never close.

The Fox entertainment president is an enthusiastic proponent of all-season scheduling—starting new shows all the time, not just in the fall. The summer will no longer be a wasteland.

Violating one of TV's formerly sacrosanct rules, most of Fox's big winners lately have avoided fall premieres. "The O.C." debuted last summer. "The Simple Life" came in December. Fox's centerpiece, "American Idol," began again in January and is dominating the ratings.

NBC entertainment chief Jeff Zucker also said he would premiere many of his network's new 2004 shows this August, right after the Summer Olympics. "A lot of the folks who don't understand some of the moves that we and others are making are playing by the old rules," Zucker says.

In its infancy, television had a year-round approach. But as live programming gave way to filmed shows, and stars began expecting summer vacations, start dates drifted toward the fall. In the early 1960s, ABC instituted a September "premiere week" to attract attention, and other networks followed suit, says Tim Brooks, co-author of "The Complete Directory to Primetime Network and Cable TV Shows."

"Once they got into the routine," Brooks says, "nobody wanted to be the one to break out of it."

Television executives believed there were fewer viewers in the summer because people stayed outside longer. So summer is where they stuck the leftovers.

Cable networks recognized the vacuum and filled it with their best material, siphoning viewers away from the networks. And the surprise summer success of broadcast shows like "Survivor" and "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire" upset conventional wisdom by proving people will watch TV whenever there's something worth watching.

Still, executives at CBS, the nation's No. 1 network, gently mock the idea of fiddling with TV's clock.

"If you launch a bad show in August, it's still going to be a bad show in September," says CBS Chairman Leslie Moonves. "Let me ask you a question. Would (NBC's) 'Coupling' have worked any better in August?"

"We're doing just fine playing by the same old rules."

Limited-run series

The old TV model called for series to run year-round, with a couple dozen new episodes and a round of repeats.

HBO changed that. Its runs series for 13 weeks, often less. Then the show disappears until new episodes are ready—"The Sopranos" returned last week after having been gone for more than a year.

Reality shows often use the same rules. That's why limited-run series are a growing trend. One of ABC's biggest new projects, "Stephen King's Kingdom Hospital," will air a total of 13 weeks.

"They don't have to commit to it for nine months of the year," said Lloyd Braun, ABC entertainment chairman. "They don't have to commit to it for five years. They basically have a beginning, a middle and end in a determined period of time and they get to move on to something else."

The downside for networks is the lack of stability. A hit series is here today, gone tomorrow.

CBS, however, feels awfully secure knowing that "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation" will air virtually every week of the year.

Abrupt schedule shifts

NBC switched "The Apprentice" from Wednesday to Thursday after just one week, concerned that "American Idol" was making it impossible to compete. Then, when Donald Trump's boardroom reality show took off, NBC quickly scheduled reruns. And then CBS hurriedly put a rerun of "CSI" on against it one week to steal some audience.

You get the picture. Schedules stay in motion as executives search for every possible advantage. TV executives are also as competitive as athletes: CBS' Moonves loves to stick it to NBC's Zucker (notice the sly reference to NBC failure "Coupling" earlier?), and vice versa. That's partly why "CSI" was deployed to derail "The Apprentice."

Zucker is a big proponent of aggressive scheduling, arguing that the days of viewers forming habits around TV schedules are largely over.

But at TV Guide magazine, executive editor Steve Sonsky says viewers are bewildered. "We get letters like, why can't NBC make up its mind whether 'The Apprentice' is on Wednesday or Thursday night?"

Many executives figure that when the ratings improve as a result, that they've satisfied more people than they've alienated.

"I think it's very difficult for a viewer to know what's going on in television right now," Berman says. "But I also understand the competitive factors involved with the business."

Changing reruns

For the most part, networks need to run a scripted show at least twice to recoup the costs of making it. But with dozens of other channels to choose from, viewers are increasingly rejecting second runs.

Some reruns score better in the ratings than others. Comedies generally do better than dramas. Dramas that tell a single story each week do better than those with a narrative thread.

So expect fewer narrative series to be repeated. ABC, for example, generally gives only one run to "NYPD Blue."

ABC is considering licensing some of their series to cable networks that will air the reruns instead. Networks are also borrowing another idea from HBO in trying insta-reruns, airing second runs less than a week after it's first shown.

Super-sized shows

Ever program your recorder for "Friends" or "American Idol" without realizing the network has tapped an extra 15 minutes onto the show—and the recorder doesn't pick it up?

The super-sized show, a phrase Zucker adapted for TV, is all about money. A few extra minutes of "Friends" means a few extra minutes of ads on television's most popular comedy.

More popular now is fiddling with starting and ending times of programs, doing anything possible to prevent viewers from using their remote controls.

One fascinating battleground is Thursday nights at 10 p.m. ET. CBS is well aware that many fans of "CSI," television's most popular show, switch networks when it's over to watch an old favorite, NBC's "ER."

So CBS frequently runs "CSI" a few minutes long. To complicate matters, NBC sometimes begins "ER" a minute or two before the hour.

Neither network wants to make it easy for a viewer to change channels. The question is whether there are repercussions to messing with the audience's viewing habits.

"There is a price you pay when you do that," Braun said. "Sometimes you evaluate it and it's worth the price."

If I can make it, you can fake it

By JIM SHEA
The Hartford Courant

Shea can be reached at
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Faking it.
Faking what?
Faking it.
It?

You know, IT.
Oh, that it.
People fake it?
Women do.
Do men fake it?
Only very strange men.
Why are we talking about this?
Because Katie Couric was talking about it.
So?

So if Katie's talking about it, America is talking about it.

Did Katie say she faked it?

She didn't say.
I'll bet she fakes it.
Why?

Because she has to get up so early.
So why do women fake it?
Experts say there are lots of reasons.

For example?

To spare the man's ego.

Women shouldn't worry about that.

Why not?
Because men basically believe that when it comes to IT, everyone's on their own.

So you're saying the male isn't devastated if the woman doesn't achieve it?

Nah; he figures she had her chance.

So it's her own fault?

Well, you can't blame the man.

You can't?
No way. I mean, he was involved for the same two or three minutes, and he had no problem.

Can a man tell when a woman is faking it?

Yes.

Yes?

Yes! Yes! Yes!

I'm confused.

Generally speaking, men know how many yeses they're good for.

So?

So, a women starts tossing around extra yeses, she's loses credibility.

You ever see "When Harry Met Sally?"

Yeah.

You didn't find Meg Ryan's restaurant performance convincing?

Not in the slightest.

Because?

Because in real life, before she was even halfway through her yesiree-ing, the guy would already have been dead asleep.

Another reason women fake it is because sometimes it takes them too long to get to it.

Women shouldn't worry about that either.

Why not?

Because, with the obvious exception, men don't mind killing time this way.

I'm sorry, the obvious exception?

When there's a game on.

Of course.

Are there any other ways a man can tell if a woman is faking it?

Depends on how perceptive the man is.

Well, what things might a real perceptive man pick up on?

Oh, I don't know; doing her nails always makes you suspicious.

Study: Ratings needed for smoking films

LOS ANGELES (AP)—If Nicolas Cage lights a cigarette in a movie, Hollywood's ratings board should respond as if he used a profanity, according to authors of a new study that criticizes glamorous images of smoking in movies rated for children under 17.

Nearly 80 percent of movies rated PG-13 feature some form of tobacco use, while 50 percent of G and PG rated films depict smoking, said Stanton Glantz, co-author of the

study, which examined 775 U.S. movies over the past five years.

"No one is saying there should never be any smoking in the movies," Glantz, a professor of medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, said Tuesday at a press conference at Hollywood High School. "What we're simply asking for is that smoking be treated by Hollywood as seriously as it treats offensive language."

He'd like to see more PG-13

movies that feature smoking—like "Matchstick Men," "Seabiscuit" and the Oscar-winning "Chicago"—get slapped with an R rating.

Since R-rated films typically earn less money because they are not open to most teenagers, Glantz said he hoped such a policy would discourage filmmakers from depicting unnecessary smoking, such as the nicotine-addicted worm aliens in "Men in Black."

The proposal includes an

exception for historical figures who actually smoked as part of their public life, Glantz added. "For example, if they wanted to make a movie about Winston Churchill, they could show him with a cigar without triggering an R-rating, but the number of movies where that actually happens is very small."

The study was funded by the charitable foundation The Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund and the National Cancer Institute.

Viggo Mortensen: A man of many parts

By TERESA WILTZ
THE WASHINGTON POST

Yes, he's cute, OK? You know, handsome, not so Aragorn-ish, perhaps, a little, OK, a lot less swashbuckling, a little grayer, a little shorter, but sexy in a boho kind of way. Cleans up nice. OK? Satisfied?

We will not join the legions of otherwise respectable women—and men—who have embarrassed themselves drooling over Viggo Mortensen, the "Lord of the Rings" star, a man who has made a name for himself as the bohemian hunk.

Let us not discuss this again. We will say this, however: He is, at first glance, a walking contradiction; that is, a man wearing his contradictions. On the one hand, he is TV ready—it is, after all, press junket time—hip black denim suit, shorn and spiked hair, pancaked face, visible evidence of the ministrations of the makeup artist who hovers nearby.

And then there's the part of him that needs no pancake: his feet. He's shoeless, his tweedy socks peeking out from beneath the hip black denim suit. It is the thing that he does, the thing noted in countless media stories about his new western, "Hidalgo," which opens Friday. The socks give him a kind of hippie insouciance. Could be intentional, could be not, but mostly, he has said, he does it because he just doesn't like footwear. And so he pads about the lobby of the Ritz-Carlton, shoeless yet stylish.

He is a man who doesn't get enough sleep. And now, as he does the whistle-stop thing through North America, he's getting even less. Because now, after 20 years of acting in more than 30 films as the intriguing sidebar, he is the headline in the new Disney film, in which he plays Frank T. Hopkins, a real-life cowboy who was purported to be half-Sioux and who claimed to have won the 3,000-mile "Ocean of Fire," a survival race across the Arabian Desert.

With "Hidalgo," this weekend's box office will tell if his cleft-chinned charm and acting chops are enough to open a movie.

Not that he seems too concerned with the attention. More often than not, his focus is elsewhere.

In between the publicity jaunts, and the premieres, there's the wind-down from the flurry that was the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy, of which the final installment, "The Return of the King," swept the Oscars on Sunday with 11 wins (and which he did not attend). And then there's the time he spends jamming on keyboards and doing vocals with the Guns N' Roses guitarist Buckethead on their new experimental album, "Pandemoniumfromamerica," or writing poetry in Spanish and in English (he is a published poet). Or snapping pictures (recently exhibiting his work at the Fototeca in Cuba). Or painting pictures, or editing photos, essays, poetry and novels at the offices of his newest baby, Perceval Press, an independent publishing house that he founded with art curator Pilar Perez in 2002.

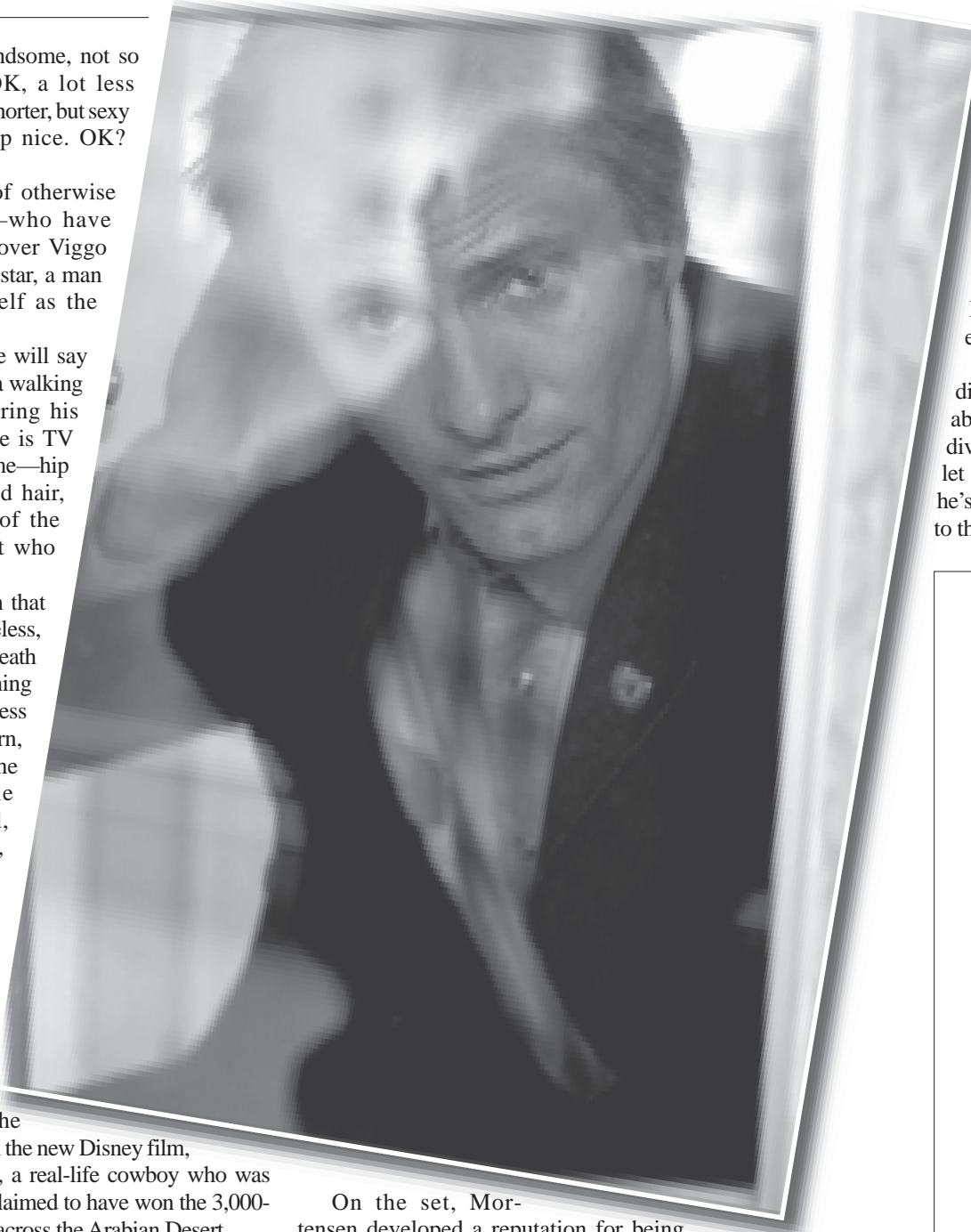
Acting isn't something that he does, like Willem Dafoe and his avant-garde theater collective, the Wooster Group, to fund his other artistic pursuits. (A little, but not much money went into start-up costs for Perceval Press, but now, he says, the company is self-sufficient.) Rather, he says, acting is just another medium for "self-expression."

"I like acting for the same reason I like photography and painting and writing and reading," says Mortensen, 45, parsing his thoughts in a softly lazy twang.

"It has to do with taking part of life and being present and ... you know, noticing what's happening. Life goes by otherwise."

He approaches all his endeavors with a certain amusement, a hmm-I-think-I'll-try-that attitude. Take the time when he was filming "A Perfect Murder" with Gwyneth Paltrow and Michael Douglas. In the movie, Mortensen played a fashionably grubby artist with an even more fashionably grubby loft where the upper-crust Paltrow would repair for an assignation between fashionably grubby sheets.

Paintings were needed to decorate the grungy loft, to give it that appropriately artistic vibe of a painter's garret. The director told Mortensen that most likely they'd rent the paintings from an artist. Mortensen, who'd painted and drawn as a child, told him, you know, I'd like to try my hand at the paintings. And he did, and, well, now he shows paintings at art galleries in New York and Los Angeles.



On the set, Mortensen developed a reputation for being game for just about anything. While filming "LOTR," he broke a tooth and famously suggested that he glue it back into his mouth so filming could continue. He did most of his stunts in "Hidalgo," something that had Disney execs squirming during screenings of dailies, according to the film's director, Joe Johnston.

Making it, of course, is open to interpretation. Mortensen has been at the film business for a long time, since his 1985 debut in Peter Weir's "Witness." And along the way, he's played against some of the most glittery of Hollywood's glitterati: Besides Paltrow there was Diane Lane in "A Walk on the Moon," Demi Moore in "G.I. Jane," Nicole Kidman in "The Portrait of a Lady." (And, of course, there were the less than glittery roles, such as "Young Guns II" and "Leatherface: Texas Chainsaw Massacre III.") He slides in and out of the characters, inhabiting their skins with secrets and vague hints of danger.

There are countless heavy-breathing Web sites populated by slavish fans who extol his Renaissance man persona. And yet he is an actor who, unless you're a rabid "LOTR" fan or took note of the 2002 edition of People's "Fifty Most Beautiful People," you may have noticed and then not noticed—not enough, that is, to put a name to the face. (The name, by the way, is Danish.) "LOTR" marked a change in that perception, and "Hidalgo" could change that even more.

Or perhaps not.

He was born in Manhattan, the first child of a Danish businessman and an American woman. When he was 2, the family moved to Argentina, where they lived for nine years (with a brief stay in Venezuela) as his father worked on different agricultural management jobs. His parents split when he was 11, and his mother took Mortensen and his two younger brothers to Upstate New York. At the time, his youngest brother couldn't even speak English; the brothers conversed with each other only in Spanish. Gradually, English became the only language that they shared.

On the set of "Hidalgo," which re-creates the 1890 massacre of Lakota Sioux by U.S. cavalry at Wounded Knee—Frank Hopkins claimed to have witnessed it—Mortensen had to learn Lakota. He was so moved by the film's depiction of the Ghost Dance that he took pictures, now the basis for "Miyelo," an art book of essays and haunting photos.

Later, he flew from Los Angeles to Rapid City, S.D., leaving a "LOTR" press tour in time to participate in the "Big Foot Ride," a

solemn, two-week journey by horseback through snow and over icy mountain paths that's meant to commemorate the massacre and the burial site. He arrived in time to make the last few days of the ride.

"It was endearing and charming to watch this mega movie star there for his own personal reasons," says Lise Balk King, who covered the event for the Web site "Native Voice." To her, she says, it appeared that "he was struggling because he really wanted to be here and not make it 'Viggo Mortensen is here from 'Lord of the Rings.''"

Fans swarmed his horse, clamoring for autographs, wanting a minute of his time, a little conversation, King says. Mortensen stayed until he'd talked to the last person—and ended up missing his plane.

Indeed, he is a talker, one who savors a good meandering discourse on politics and world events, about art and spirituality, about Cuba and Morocco and the big wide world that he loves to dive into. So he talks, yes, but he's not one to talk about himself, let alone his career. He'll riff on "Hidalgo," because that is what he's here to do, and you get the sense that he feels a certain connection to the story, to the notion of the cowboy as a noble figure.

wallace

Regular reassessment helps patients in therapy succeed

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN



Dear Abby

Sometimes medication is needed; often it is not. Most uncomplicated depression and anxiety problems respond favorably within 10 to 20 sessions. Additional complicating factors may extend the number of sessions, but by the 20th session the person should see definite improvement.

Just "talking about" problems is helpful, but not usually enough to make and maintain changes. It is also not generally helpful to focus ONLY on the past/childhood when the problems are occurring today. Therapists and clients can be sure that goals are being met by assessing behavior and emotional changes at regular intervals.

We hope this information is helpful.

ERIK J. ABELL, PH.D., GAIL SIMPSON, MSW,
LCSW, COSTA MESA, CALIF.

DEAR DR. ABELL AND MS. SIMPSON: Thank you for lending your expertise to answer this often-asked question. People who are emotionally vulnerable are not always in the best position to evaluate their own progress. I'm sure your letter will be appreciated by many readers.

DEAR ABBY: I am 30 years old and have been married for four years. I have known since I was a teen-ager that I never wanted to have children. My husband was well aware of this when we met, dated and married.

His sister gave birth to a baby boy last summer, and suddenly my husband has changed his mind and wants children too.

I know I am not parent material. I am impatient with children and generally uncomfortable around them. I do not want my life to be defined by children, nor do I want to give up the lifestyle I enjoy to raise them.

What can I do? Is a divorce pending?

CHILDLESS BY CHOICE IN FLORIDA

DEAR C.B.C.: While parenthood can be joyful and rewarding, it requires commitment and sacrifice. The bundle from heaven cannot be returned to sender if the recipients change their minds. It would be interesting to see if baby-sitting for his nephew would change your husband's mind—or yours. However, if you cannot come to a meeting of the minds, a divorce may indeed be on the horizon.

DEAR ABBY: My marriage is pretty much over. My wife and I can't get along, and all the counseling we've had didn't help.

I feel "naked" without my wedding band and am wondering if it is proper for me to wear another ring that has personal sentimental value on my ring finger. I hope this isn't a dumb question.

TOM IN NEW YORK

DEAR TOM: No question is dumb if it's sincere. You may wear any kind of ring you wish on your ring finger—but please be aware that a ring on the third finger of the left hand is a signal that the wearer is "unavailable."

P.S. Many divorced people feel naked when they remove their wedding ring for the last time, but that stage usually passes by the time the tan line fades.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$10 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in price.)

Oprah named one of most fashionable women

NEW YORK (AP)—Oprah Winfrey—talk show host, actress and magazine editor—has a new title to add to her resume: one of the world's most fashionable women.

Winfrey appears for the first time on Vanity Fair's 2004 International Best-Dressed List, which is being released Wednesday.

The host of "The Oprah Winfrey Show" says Jackie Onassis and Coco Chanel are her fashion icons, and picks Gianfranco Ferré—who created the silvery gown she wore to the Oscars—as her favorite designer.

Also among the 10 women on the list are actress Cate Blanchett, "Lost in Translation" writer-director Sofia Coppola, model Kate Moss and Aerin Lauder Zinterhofer, Estee Lauder's vice president for global advertising.

Not surprisingly, soccer player David Beckham—an international fashion icon whose style has inspired Dolce & Gabbana—made the men's top 10 list. Among those joining him are actors George Clooney and Jude Law and news anchors Brian Williams of NBC and



Talk show host Oprah Winfrey arrives for the 76th annual Academy Awards, Sunday, Feb. 29, 2004, in Los Angeles.

Anderson Cooper of CNN.

The annual list—which originated in the '20s and

gained prominence under the guidance of fashion maven Eleanor Lambert, who died in

Ross appealing appraisal decision

GREENWICH, Conn. (AP)—Diana Ross and some other famous names in Greenwich are appealing the town's tax appraisal of their properties.

Ross faces a \$168,000 bill for local taxes on her estate in the exclusive Belle Haven neighborhood and a waterfront lot in the Byram section, the Greenwich Time reported. That's a 3.5 percent increase.

Also appealing their taxes are James Stillman Rockefeller, the 100-year-old grandson of Standard Oil co-founder William Rockefeller, and Sloan Lindemann, the daughter of cell phone pioneer George L. Lindemann and owner of the town's most valuable piece of residential property.

Dozens of property owners argued their cases Monday



Ross

before the town's Board of Assessment Appeals. Ross, Rockefeller and Lindemann did not appear before the board, instead sending their lawyers, the

newspaper reported.

Ross is disputing the town's \$13.4 million appraisal of her 5-acre Belle Haven estate, which includes a 12,562-square-foot mansion with 11 bedrooms, six full bathrooms, five fireplaces, a hot tub, pool, tennis court and central air conditioning, plus two apartments over the garage. She's also contesting the \$8.1 million appraisal on the Byram property.

The pop diva claims the town exaggerated the extent of improvements that have been made to the Belle Haven property she bought in 1988. Town officials say Ross denied their requests to enter her home for appraisal purposes.

Rockefeller's tax bill is more than \$140,000; Lindemann's is about \$207,000.

Prince to broadcast show via satellite

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Twenty years after he first appeared on the big screen in "Purple Rain," Prince returns to movie theaters for one night only March 29.

The Minnesota rock star plans to broadcast his concert in Los Angeles live via satellite to

32 Regal Cinema theaters around the country.

Tickets are on sale at the theaters for \$15 and online starting Tuesday at <http://www.RegalCM.com>.

The Los Angeles concert is the first major show on Prince's Musicology tour, on which he

pledges to perform many of his old hits for the last time. He plans to hit at least 38 cities.

Prince will be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame next Monday. The Star Tribune is printing a 10-page special section on his 25-year legacy Sunday.

'American Splendor' hero to write book

NEW YORK (AP)—Harvey Pekar, the cult comic book hero and inspiration for the acclaimed film "American Splendor," has agreed to write three graphic novels for Ballantine Books, an imprint of Random House, Inc.

Pekar's first work for Ballantine, a "sequel of sorts" to "American Splendor," will come out this fall.

"People have been frustrated for the last 10 years or so. They've known Harvey's around, they've known he's alive, but they can't find his stuff anywhere," Pekar's wife and collaborator, Joyce Brabner, said in a statement Tuesday.

"Now, publishing with Ballantine, the work will have a

much wider distribution and Harvey will find a much broader audience."

"American Splendor" starred Paul Giamatti as Pekar and Hope Davis as his wife. The real Pekar and Brabner, along with foster daughter Danielle and some family friends, also appeared in the 2003 movie as themselves.

October—will now appear in Vanity Fair magazine, starting with its April issue.

'Murphy Brown' actor Robert Pastorelli dies

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Robert Pastorelli, who played the screwball housepainter Eldin on "Murphy Brown," was found dead in his Hollywood Hills home in what the coroner's office said may have been a drug overdose. He was 49.

Coroner's office Lt. Ed Winter said Pastorelli's body was found by his assistant Monday in a bathroom. An autopsy was planned.

"It's a possible accidental death," Winter said, adding, "There was drug paraphernalia found."

On CBS' "Murphy Brown," he played Eldin Bernecky, an oddball housepainter for TV newswoman Murphy Brown, played by Candice Bergen. Eldin's work never seems to get done because of his high artistic standards. He spends much of his time meddling in Murphy's life, often dispensing sage advice.

Pastorelli finished work with John Travolta last month on the movie "Be Cool," the sequel to the comedy "Get Shorty." He played a hit man.

"I am still unable to grasp this tragic news," said "Be Cool" director F. Gary Gray. "Robert was a true professional and a total delight to work with. My heart goes out to his family, and he will be sorely missed."

Pastorelli, born in New Brunswick, N.J., was an aspiring boxer in his youth. But a near-fatal car crash on his 19th birthday ended his dreams of a pro sports career.

He had roles in such movies as "Outrageous Fortune" (1987), "Beverly Hills Cop II" (1987), and "Dances With Wolves" (1990).

Pastimes

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

PLYWOOD PRODUCTS

Solution: 8 letters

L	H	S	S	T	M	A	K	E	C	T	M	R	Y	H
Y	A	L	R	E	V	O	R	O	D	E	A	D	O	
N	M	I	S	K	W	O	O	D	S	E	L	L	N	M
I	M	D	R	A	C	S	W	L	T	N	A	A	E	
V	E	I	L	E	N	O	L	I	I	H	M	R	S	P
B	R	N	O	I	T	A	L	U	S	N	I	E	A	T
L	U	G	A	F	W	A	I	B	R	N	N	N	W	F
T	A	R	K	I	T	E	M	P	E	R	E	D	S	L
M	G	M	C	T	L	L	E	V	E	L	O	M	B	U
R	L	A	I	S	K	S	E	B	N	E	P	O	H	S
O	U	C	H	N	N	D	M	I	E	D	A	L	L	H
F	E	E	T	D	A	U	E	R	V	R	E	D	A	F
C	E	D	A	R	L	T	C	D	A	N	K	Y	O	
H	A	N	G	S	P	O	E	H	K	H	I	E	E	O
F	R	A	M	E	R	U	S	S	E	R	P	D	R	R

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Beds, Birch, Block, Board, Build, Cedar, Core, Cost, Deck, Door, Feet, Fits, Floor, Flush, Form, Frame, Glue, Grade, Grains, Hammer, Hangs, Hard, Home, Inlay, Insulation, Laminates, Last, Lattice, Layer, Level, Lumber, Make, Marine, Material, Melamine, Millwork, Mold, Nails, Overlay, Panel, Pine, Plank, Pressure, Roof, Sand, Saws, Sell, Shop, Sliding, Solid, Tempered, Thick, Thin, Tree, Trim, Veneers, Vinyl, Walls, Walnut. **Yesterday's Answer: Passive**

To order the new **WONDERWORD TREASURY 2: "Memorable Occasions,"** send check or money order for \$10.95 plus \$3.25 postage and handling (\$14.20 total) to Universal Press Syndicate, Attn: Wonderword, 4520 Main St., Kansas City, Mo. 64111 or call toll-free, 1-800-255-4734, ext. 6013.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Greek cross

4 Navigator's stack

8 Mexican money

12 Larry King's employer

13 Touch

14 Saharan

15 Circus clown's ride

17 Incense

18 "Go, team!"

19 Summery shades

21 Gardening tool

24 Barnyard comment

25 Bale stuff

26 The word?

28 "— Got Mail"

32 Terrible guy?

34 Hiatus

36 Recognize

37 Graf rival

39 Lad's lid

41 — -de-France

42 Shooter's ammo

44 Arthur Murray's lessons

46 Pairs participants

50 Old Olds

51 Llama territory

52 Cosmos

56 — even keel (stable)

57 Tiresome sort

58 Enthusiast

59 Start of a famous quote

60 The third man

61 33-Down's domain

2 Political writer

3 Big name in tires

4 Willful destruction

5 Rudimentary lesson

6 Tabloid writing

7 Watt's power

8 Shared in the experience

9 Ontario neighbor

10 Ledge

11 Praiseful poetry

16 Cornfield call

20 Sauce source

21 Anything but that

22 Dance party

23 Shlep

27 Doorway accessory

29 Mythical creatures

30 Muskrat's kin

31 Lambs' dams

33 Trident bearer

35 Launch site

38 Witness

40 Wizard of Oz, aka Professor —

43 Island off Venezuela

45 Born

46 Dick and Jane's dog

47 Casino pastime

48 Desert denizen

49 Nose-in-the-air type

53 Anger

54 Seek restitution

55 Timetable abbr.

DOWN

1 Horned Frogs' sch.

Solution time: 25 mins.

H	A	Y	E	R	I	K	P	O	O	L	
E	R	E	M	O	T	E	L	U	R	E	
L	E	A	P	O	T	P	O	U	R	R	
P	A	R	K	A	I	N	N				
			I	T	L	L	E	G	R	E	
P	A	N	T	H	E	O	N	E	U	R	O
A	L	E	S	A	G	O	S	N	I	P	
N	E	W	S	P	O	T	T	A	G	E	S
G	E	T	U	P	N	E	A	R			
			B	R	A	T	E	S	T	Y	
P	A	N	T	O	M	I	M	E	E	R	A
O	V	A	L	E	V	I	L	P	E	R	
D	E	N	Y	S	E	X	Y	T	E	N	

Yesterday's answer 1-1

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15				16					17			
		18				19		20				
21	22				23		24					
25			26		27		28		29	30	31	
32			33		34		35		36			
37				38		39		40		41		
			42		43		44		45			
46	47	48				49		50				
51					52		53			54	55	
56					57				58			
59					60					61		

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY
Verne Troyer, Don Novello, Embeth Davidtz, Olivia Williams

HAPPY BIRTHDAY: You are dependable, sensible and romantic and this year you will put these characteristics to good work. This is a year of expansion in all areas of your life. Your contributions will be well received and your reputation will grow. Your numbers are 5, 12, 17, 26, 35, 44

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ARIES (March 21-April 19)
You must be willing to listen to others this year to make the most of the opportunities that surround you. Work on being more patient and careful. ★★



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
Move forward with wisdom to become less stubborn. Your inability to accept change has been a downfall in the past. Don't allow it to continue. ★★



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
To start the year off on the right foot, stop talking so much and put your versatility to work for you. Think first and then take action. Don't stretch the truth even if it does make for a better story. ★★



CANCER (June 21-July 22)
You have a great year ahead, so curb your mood swings. Sharing is another one of the problems that you face. It's not so hard — just do it. ★★★★★



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
For those of you who want to take an honest look at yourself, consider curbing your insatiable urge to be so generous this year with your belongings and cash. Be fair and remember that charity begins at home. ★★



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
This may be the year to resolve your critical outlook and stop judging yourself and everyone around you. Start viewing your cup as half full, not half empty. ★★★★★



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
Stop procrastinating and concentrate on the facts if you really want to get somewhere this year. How you handle yourself during the first half of the year will determine the outcome during the last quarter. ★★



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
Redirect your energy into being successful instead of vengeful. This isn't the year to waste time settling old scores. Be progressive and creative, looking toward the future. ★★



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
You must eliminate your desire to exaggerate. Stop being evasive with the ones you love. Curb your need to take risks with the family savings. Responsibility will be the key to moving forward. ★★



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
Concentrate on giving more of yourself emotionally. Learn to share, play and enjoy leisure time with the ones you love. You should be able to make large profits this year. ★★★★★



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
It's time to show a little compassion if you want to make progress in your life. Resolve to curb your headstrong temperament and open your arms to friendship and love. ★★

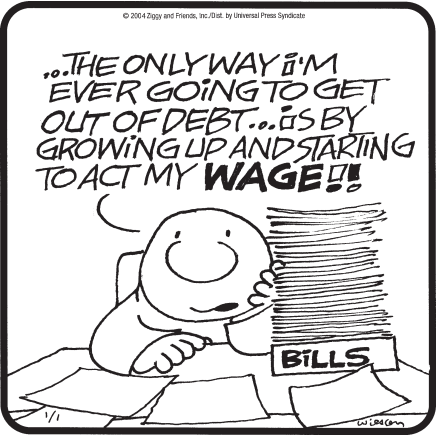


PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
Start the year off with a bang by working with creative components that you have a natural affinity for. Being practical is not your thing, but incorporate a little restraint into what you pursue. ★★★★★

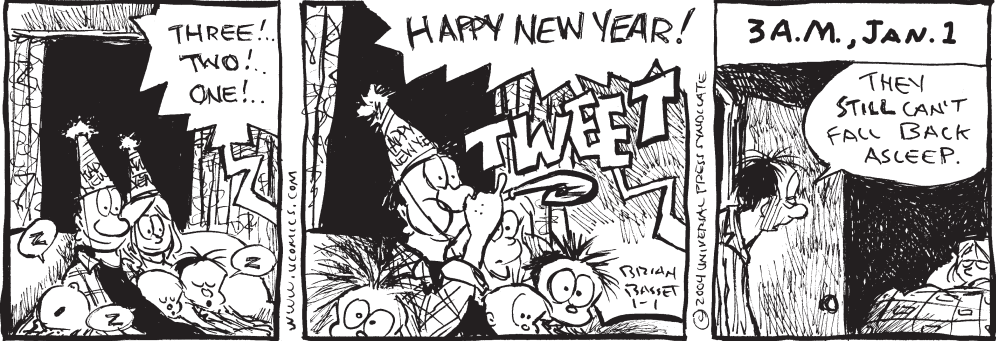
BIRTHDAY BABY: You are bright, articulate and very much in control. You are ambitious and want to make a difference. You are dedicated and willing to do whatever is necessary to benefit mankind.

(Need advice? Check out Eugenia on the Web at www.astroadvice.com or www.eugenialast.com.)

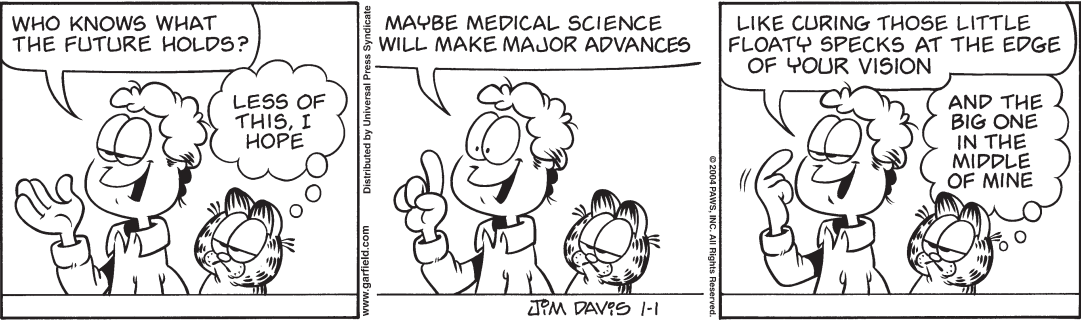
Ziggy®



Adam@home



Garfield®



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy





MBL Standings		
Verizon	1	0
Joeten	1	0
NMC Proa	1	1
Preparation Y	1	1
C.K. Legends	0	2



SPORTS BRIEFS



Tan Holdings Corporation



American League				
East Division				
Team	W	L	Pct	GB
y- NY Yankees	99	58	.631	-
Boston	91	66	.580	8
Toronto	73	84	.465	26
Baltimore	67	90	.427	32
Tampa Bay	54	103	.344	45
Central Division				
y- Minnesota	90	66	.577	-
Chicago Sox	79	78	.503	11.5
Cleveland	70	87	.446	20.5
Kansas City	61	96	.389	29.5
Detroit	54	102	.346	36
West Division				
x- Oakland	99	57	.635	-
Anaheim	96	61	.611	3.5
Seattle	90	66	.577	9
Texas	71	86	.452	28.5

National League				
East Division				
y- Atlanta	97	58	.626	-
Montreal	79	78	.503	19
Philadelphia	79	78	.503	19
Florida	76	81	.484	22
NY Mets	74	82	.474	23.5
Central Division				
y- St. Louis	93	64	.592	-
Houston	83	75	.525	10.5
Cincinnati	76	81	.484	17
Pittsburgh	70	87	.446	23
Chicago Cubs	65	92	.414	28
Milwaukee	55	102	.350	38
West Division				
Arizona	94	63	.599	-
San Francisco	90	66	.577	3.5
Los Angeles	88	68	.564	5.5
Colorado	72	84	.462	21.5
San Diego	65	91	.417	28.5
y-clinched division title				
x-clinched playoff spot				

Rotary Standings		
Tanapag Warriors	7	0
OIAces	5	2
Dan Dan Sharks	5	3
San Vicente Suns	4	2
G-Rollers	4	4
Gualo Rai Wildcats	3	4
Kagman Cougars	2	4
Susupe Hi-5	1	4
C.K. Hoosiers	0	7

NBA STANDINGS				
EASTERN CONFERENCE				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Orlando	1	0	1.000	—
Boston	0	0	.000	1/2
Miami	0	0	.000	1/2
New Jersey	0	0	.000	1/2
New York	0	0	.000	1/2
Washington	0	0	.000	1/2
Philadelphia	0	1	.000	1
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	0	0	.000	—
Chicago	0	0	.000	—
Cleveland	0	0	.000	—
Detroit	0	0	.000	—
Indiana	0	0	.000	—
Milwaukee	0	0	.000	—
New Orleans	0	0	.000	—
Toronto	0	0	.000	—
WESTERN CONFERENCE				
Midwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Dallas	0	0	.000	—
Denver	0	0	.000	—
Houston	0	0	.000	—
Memphis	0	0	.000	—
Minnesota	0	0	.000	—
San Antonio	0	0	.000	—
Utah	0	0	.000	—
Pacific Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Golden State	0	0	.000	—
L.A. Clippers	0	0	.000	—
L.A. Lakers	0	0	.000	—
Phoenix	0	0	.000	—
Portland	0	0	.000	—
Sacramento	0	0	.000	—
Seattle	0	0	.000	—

NFL Standings						
AMERICAN CONFERENCE						
East						
Team	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Miami	1	0	0	1.000	49	21
New England	1	0	0	1.000	30	14
N.Y. Jets	1	0	0	1.000	37	31
Buffalo	0	1	0	.000	31	37
South						
Houston	1	0	0	1.000	19	10
Indianapolis	1	0	0	1.000	28	25
Tennessee	1	0	0	1.000	27	24
Jacksonville	0	1	0	.000	25	28
North						
Baltimore	0	1	0	.000	7	10
Cincinnati	0	1	0	.000	6	34
Cleveland	0	1	0	.000	39	40
Pittsburgh	0	1	0	.000	14	30
West						
Denver	1	0	0	1.000	23	16
Kansas City	1	0	0	1.000	40	39
Oakland	1	0	0	1.000	31	17
San Diego	1	0	0	1.000	34	6
NATIONAL CONFERENCE						
East						
Washington	1	0	0	1.000	31	23
Dallas	0	1	0	.000	10	19
N.Y. Giants	0	1	0	.000	13	16
Philadelphia	0	1	0	.000	24	27
South						
Carolina	1	0	0	1.000	10	7
New Orleans	1	0	0	1.000	26	20
Atlanta	0	1	0	.000	34	37
Tampa Bay	0	1	0	.000	20	26
North						
Chicago	1	0	0	1.000	27	23
Green Bay	1	0	0	1.000	37	34
Detroit	0	1	0	.000	21	49
Minnesota	0	1	0	.000	23	27
West						
San Francisco	1	0	0	1.000	16	13
Arizona	0	1	0	.000	23	31
Seattle	0	1	0	.000	17	31
St. Louis	0	1	0	.000	16	23



**Dallas Mavericks top
Clippers, 122-95**

Nick Van Exel and Michael Finley had 24 points each as Dallas Mavericks remained unbeaten at home despite losing leading scorer Dirk Nowitzki to an ankle injury, beating the Los Angeles Clippers 122-95 Tuesday night.

25

Saipan Tribune
Sports

**Pathway festivities
to push through**

With supertyphoon Pongsona gone and Saipan finally in the clear, all systems are go for this coming Saturday's Saipan Beach Pathway Christmas in the Marianas festivities to mark the landmark's completion.

27

